GUIDE TO THE RC1 BELORUSSIA FILE

[The RC1 Belorussia file contains specific data on Belorussia (White Russia) and its people. The origin of the name White Russians or White Ruthenians is uncertain, consequently the term Belorussia is preferred. For most of its history, Belorussia has not been a distinct political unit, but is rather an ethnic unit, identified by its language, religion, and folk literature.

The modern Belorussian SSR is located between 51° and 56°15'N. latitude and 23° and 33° E. longitude. It is bordered on the east and northeast by the RSFSR, on the south by the Ukrainian SSR, on the southwest by Poland, and on the northwest and north by Lithuania and Latvia. The 1970 population of the Belorussian SSR was 9,002,000 and the density in 1968 was 111/sq. mile. There are not many large cities. Most of the people live in small rural villages. In the cities, the Russian language is spoken and the culture is considerably Russified while the rural areas have retained the Belorussian language and culture to a larger degree.

The Belorussian language is part of the eastern group of the Slavic branch of Indo-European. It is most closely related to Ukrainian and Russian. The dialects form two major groups. The southwestern ones are more similar to Ukrainian dialects, and the northeastern ones are closer to Russian.

The territory of contemporary Belorussia was settled by the Slavic-speaking Kriviane tribe by at least the 10th century A.D. and was part of the Kievan state from the 10th to the 13th century. It received the Eastern form of Christianity along with the Cyrillic alphabet. In the 14th century, Belorussia was included in the Lithuanian state and later in the Polish-Lithuanian state. From this union, the Belorussians were exposed to the Roman Catholic religion, the Latin alphabet, and other Western influences. Several centuries of conflict ensued between the Russian Empire and the Polish-Lithuanian state. In 1795, when Poland was partitioned, Belorussia became part of the Russian Empire. After World War I there were 18 million people in the area of Belorussia. By treaty between Poland and the Soviet Union, part of the territory was incorporated in the RSFSR, part was given to Poland (this territory later became part of the RSFSR also), and the third part became the Belorussian SSR.

Religiously, Belorussia is divided among Orthodox, Uniate, and Latin-rite Catholics.

Belorussia is predominantly agricultural, the most important crops being rye, potatoes, and flax. In 1968 over 65% of the population was engaged in agriculture. Since Sovietization, handicraft cooperatives have been established. The most important products of these cooperatives are knitted fabrics, sewing articles, footwear, furniture, carriages, hardware, and musical instruments. The most important industries are food processing, metal-working, and machine building.

There are five sources in the RC1 Belorussia file, two of which are translations from Russian. The sources are not continuously numbered, there are no sources numbered 1-5, 10, or 11 at this time. These sources were all published after World War II and deal primarily with politics and economics. 6: Krushinskii is a translation from Russian. It is a description of the inadequate educational system in Soviet Belorussia. It attributes low attendance rates to the lack of textbooks, fuel, and buildings. 7: Krushinsky is also a translation from Russian. It consists of personal recollections of the author, an official of the Belorussian SSR, of political purges between the two World Wars. 8: Redmer is an UNRRA report on the Belorussian economy just after World War II. 9: American Russian Institute is the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR as amended to 1947. 12: Vakar is a brief article on the possible etymology of the name "White Russia."

The RC1 file contains very little cultural data and it is not recommended for comparative purposes. The file was processed in 1955-1956.]

728 The Bolshevik regime took away the independence of the
101 Belorussian nation by force. The region was first occupied by the Germans, and in 1919 and 1920 it became the arena of the savage and devastating Soviet-Polish War which came to an end only in November , 1920. The peace treaty which the Soviets and the Poles signed in Riga was tragic for Belorussia. In it a nation of eighteen million(1) was dismembered into three parts: about four million /2/ Belorussians were given by the Bolsheviks to Poland who, during her existence as a state tried, rashly but unsuccessfully, by every kind of intolerable method to turn Belorussians into Poles and Catholics. The Communist dictatorship was established over the remaining Belorussian territory. But even that remaining under the Communists was subdivided into two parts. Out of the six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya (1) the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (B. S. S. R.) was organized. The Vitebskaya, Mogilevskaya, and newly organized Gomel'skaya Guberniya remained included in Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic
644 (R. S. F. S. R.). The six uyezds of the B. S. S. R. represented a very convenient base for the postwar struggle with Poland. Starting in the very first days after the conclusion of peace with Poland, the Soviets used every means to try and arouse discontent and alarm among the population, especially the Belorussians, who had been left in the power of Poland. The Soviets also attempted to undermine the Polish economy which was rather weak. To this end armed units of the G. P. U. were organized in the border regions of Belorussia and sent into Western Belorussia. These units plundered and burned estates, murdered and executed policemen and government officials. A certain Mukha, the leader of one of these units, was particularly renowned. These "insurgents" always had a place of

1. According to other estimates the Belorussian nation at that time numbered not 18 but 20 and even 24 million persons.

1. The six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya comprised the Minskoy, Borisovskiy, Igumenskiy, Bobrugskiy, Slutskiy, and Mozyrskiy uyezd.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
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III. BYELORUSSIA

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. 101 ● 186

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be. 186 642
Be. [182]

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

Be [728]

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

S.U. 635 Be. 642 131 161 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be. 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [661]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [10]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [192]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

THE NAME "WHITE RUSSIA"[1]

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR

● 103 THE TERM Belorussia[2] is not well known outside the Slavic world. The area is more frequently referred to as "White Russia." Since 1917, however, use of the latter term has become a source of confusion. The Russians who fought against the Reds in the Civil War of 1918–20 were also called "White Russians." Although in Russian the term *Belorussy*, the ethnic group, and *Belye Russkie*, the political group, are easily distinguishable, there is no way of making the distinction clear in literal translation into English. Many people still cannot understand how an anti-Soviet group succeeded in organizing a republic within the Soviet Union, and why its members are called "white" after they have turned "red." In view of the general confusion, it is perhaps time to suggest that when referring to the ethnic group, the term Belorussian replace the term "White Russian" in our libraries, documents and literature.

The question is: When and why were these lands and people first called "white"?

There is no written evidence that the term White Russia (*Belaja Rus'*, *Alba Russia*) was used before 1382 (Karamzin). At that time, and probably some time before, it was known among the Poles, Livonians, Prussians, and perhaps other Germans (Lamanskij). It designated at least part, if not the whole, of present Belorussia which was at that time a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The origin and meaning of the word "white" as applied to this particular part of the country have been the subject of considerable
[291] dispute. Some historians believe the term to have originated from the white clothing, smock, leggings, and homespun overcoat, which the people of this region have worn since time immemorial (Herberstein, Leroy-Beaulieu). Others attribute it to the deep snow which covers the country from October to April, and suggest that the people wore white clothes "because their country was called white" (Tatiščev).
[142] Still others find the explanation in the light complexions of the people: fair skin, blond hair, and pale blue eyes (Karskij). The theory which connects the name with the white clothing of the people has apparently been officially adopted in the B. S. S. R. At least Kuzma

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[f. 1]

[1] The research basic to this paper was partially supported by a grant from the Russian Research Center of Harvard University.

[2] The spelling *Byelorussia* is preferred by some translators of Soviet literature into English. The author, however, feels that the spelling *Belorussia* is adequate. The use of *y* as a vowel softener in the middle of a word is more likely to confuse the English speaking reader than to aid in pronunciation.

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103 Kiselev, chairman of the Belorussian delegation to the United Nations, explained the term "White Russia" as having arisen "because of the national costume of the Belorussians" (Associated Press, May 24, 1946). Simple theories are tempting. As a small part of the country was called Black Russia, some ethnographers also have assumed that this name was given to it because its inhabitants "used to wear black caps and black coats" (Zograf).

One could perhaps accept these theories if the terms White Croat and White and Black Huns were not used long before the term White Russian.[3] As neither natural scenery nor clothing and complexion could have accounted for these names, some other explanation must be sought.

The term "black" has been explained by the fact that, according to the Chinese tradition, black was the color of the north. This concept is apparently common to most of the steppe people throughout the continent, and has been the origin of the terms Black Bulgars, Black Huns, Black Ugrians, and so on (Vernadsky). No evidence, however, has ever been presented to show that people were called "white" because of their geographical position. Even if such evidence did exist, it could not possibly explain the origin of White Russia.
103 Moreover, by the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the six-
175 teenth century, the Poles and Lithuanians used to call Muscovite Russia "white," and Belorussia "black": "*Ruś pod kniaziem Moskiewskim Białą Rusią nazwano, a tę, która do Polski należała—Czarną*" (Russia under the Prince of Moscow is called White Russia and that which belonged to Poland is called Black).[4] The Novgorodian chronicler of the fifteenth century describes the Byzantine emperor John Paleologue as having said that "the highest form of Christianity is in White Russia where my brother Vasilij Vasilevič (of Moscow) is the king; eastern monarchs obey him and princes serve him with their lands."[5] Latin documents describe Ivan III of Moscow as *Ioannes, dux albae Russiae* (1472). Tred'jakovskij saw White Russia as located on both banks of the Dnieper, with "Smolensk as its capital." The picture is further confused in the seventeenth century when the term "White Russia" also included the Ukrainian lands of Kiev and Volyn (Potebnja).

103 Besides White Russia, a Red Russia, *Červonaja Rus'*, had been known long before the Reds appeared in Russia. It is present Galicia or Western Ukraine. The name has been explained as deriving from

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[3] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, I; English translation by S. H. Cross, *The Primary Russian Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), pp. 138, 140–41.

[4] Quoted from A. Potebnja, p. 119; see *infra*, Bibliographical Note.

[5] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, VI, 152–53; Appendix XIX, p. 117.

the people's habit of wearing red clothes; they used a dye which they called *červec*. A. Potebnja pointed out, however, that the use of *červec* had been common to all the Ukraine, not only to Galicia. He suggested that the name of the country may have come from the city of Červen, first mentioned in the Chronicle under the year 981. Červen apparently was an important political and economic center of the time, for several settlements along the Bug River were known as the Červenian cities, *gorody červen'scii*. Later, it would seem, the name applied to the whole region. This theory gave G. Il'inskij the idea that the name White Russia might have similar origins. Indeed, a town of Belsk near the ethnic East Slavic border dates from the thirteenth century (1253); it is situated between the rivers Belaja and Beljanka, and is surrounded in the north, east and south by the towns of Białystok, Beloveža and Bela respectively. As the nearby cities gravitating to Červen were named "Červenian," so "it would seem quite possible" that the towns around Belsk "were known as the Belskan cities (*gorody bel'scii*)," and that the name was later extended "to the whole country east of the city." Thus, according to Il'inskij, the term "red" (*červony*) came to designate the Russian people in the Polish, and the term "white" (*bely*) in the Lithuanian "spheres of influence."

The analogy is superficial and not warranted by a bit of historical evidence. Contrary to *gorody červen'scii* known to the Chronicle, no mention of *gorody bel'scii* is found in any document ancient or modern. Neither do we find any reference to Belsk, at one time the possession of the Galič-Volynian princes, as a political and economic center of any importance toward which other cities may have gravitated. G. Il'inskij leaves the term Black Russia without explanation (for no city with the name formed with the radical *čern-* has been known in that region), and no light is thrown upon the question why the Croats and the Serbs, and later Muscovy, were also called "white." Moreover, the analogy is based on a theory which itself is questionable. The adjectives *červenskij* and *červonyj* represent semantic differentiations which exclude substitution of one for another. The same, of course, is true of *belskij* and *belyj*. How such a substitution could have occurred, if it did, in the case of "Červonaja Rus'," A. Potebnja did not care to explain.[6]

[6] Cf. V. Vinogradov, *Russkij jazyk. Grammatičeskoe učenie o slove* (Moscow, 1947), pp. 221–31, and R. Smal-Stocki, *Abris des Ukrainischen Substantivebildung* (Vienna, 1915), p. 28; also his *Značinnja ukraïns'kych prykmetnykiv* (Warsaw, 1926), pp. 66, 74, and 81. We do not know when the name Červonaja Rus' first appeared (Lamanskij). We find it on a map by Fra Mauro (1459–70) translated as *Russia rossa*, and one may suppose that the term was known for some time before. It has been suggested that the country was called *rossa* because of the red hair of its inhabitants (Ripley) and by strangers who used the same term for the color red and the color brown (cf. J. Furrel, *The Nine-*

The origins of the term "White Russia" have also been sought in the religious background of the Slavic peoples. Supporters of this theory remind us that Constantine Porphyrogenitus used the term "white" in order to distinguish the baptized Croats and Serbs from those who remained pagan (Svencicki). But this distinction could not hold for the Belorussians, since all the Slavic tribes from Kiev to Novgorod were Christians in the fourteenth century when the name White Russia first appeared in documents.[7]

Discouraged by the historical evidence, one may seek refuge in the darkness of prehistoric times. According to certain writers, the Russian word for "white" (*belyj*) was derived from the name of an obscure Slavic deity *BELbog*, *BEL-gorjuč-kamen'* (otherwise: *alatyr'*, *aladyr'*, "magic stone").[8] Some traces of the ancient cult of Belbog are indeed found among the Western Slavs. Although little is known about the cult, one can deduce that Belbog was the opposite of Černobog, god of evil. Hence the association of the adjective *belyj* with anything good, pure, light and bright. The Slavic proper name Beloslav, though rare, supposedly expressed the same idea (Miklosich). Some writers have seen a relation between Belbog and Belun, a mythical character in Ukrainian and Belorussian folklore, personifying good fortune (Afanas'ev, Dahl).[9] It is only a step further to the proposition that the country was called "white" because its people worshipped a "white god."

The theory found no supporters at the time it was formulated (1826), but it was revived a century later by a group of Belorussian political exiles in Lithuania (1923). Impressed by the apparent

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teenth Century, XVII (1885), 321–30.) The name *červonaja* may thus have appeared as a Polish or Ukrainian translation from Latin. Indeed, the color symbolism may have nothing to do with it. In 1918–20, the peasant guerillas fighting both the Reds and the Whites and living in the woods, were often called *Zelěnaja Rus'*. Cf. "*kondovaja*, *izbjanaja* Rus' " (A. Blok), "*sermjažnaja* Rus' " (N. Nekrasov), "*brodjačaja* Rus'," "*svjataja* Rus'," etc.

[7] At the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, "enigmatic northern Croatia . . . reappeared, after a long eclipse, as a young and vigorous pagan State." From the context of Chapter XXXI it appears that Constantine used the term "white" to stress the political independence of those Croats who "have remained without baptism to our day." Cf. Henri Grégoire, "L'origine et le nom des Croates et des Serbes," *Byzantion*, XVII (1944–45), p. 96.

[8] M. Makarov, "Neskol'ko slov osobennykh, upotrebljaemykh v raznykh oblastjakh Rossii," *Vestnik Evropy* XXI–XXII (1826), 143–48.

[9] Association of the color white with good fortune was also not unknown in the West. Among the different meanings of "white," Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* lists: (now rare) "fortunate," "auspicious." Cf. F. Portal, *Des couleurs symboliques dans l'antiquité, le moyen-âge et les temps modernes* (Paris, 1837); K. E. Goetz, "Weiss und Schwarz bei den Römern," *Festschrift zum 25 jährigen Stiftungsfest des hist.-philol. Ver., Universität München* (Munich, 1905), pp. 63–73; more relevent though contradictory data in F. B. Gummere, "On the Symbolic Use of the Colors Black and White in Germanic Tradition," *Haverford College Studies*, I (1889), 112–62.

similarity between Belbog of Slavic and Bäldäg of Teutonic mythology, they suggested that the Belorussians might be really Balts, and not Slavs at all: *Bělbog*—White God; *Bäldäg*—White Day; *Balts*—the Whites; *Mare Balticum*—White Sea; Belorussians—White Russians—*Baltic* Russians.[10] Indeed, if Belorussia and the Baltic are called "white" for the same reason, albeit in different languages, they must belong together. Mythology and linguistics do not always yield to political purposes. The attempt to separate the Belorussians from the Slavic family did not develop further, and was for some time abandoned.

In 1948, however, the idea reappeared in a periodical published by Belorussian emigrants in the American Zone of Germany. An [181] editorial concedes that the Belorussians "borrowed" many important characteristics, both positive and negative, from the Slavs, but urges "not to close our eyes to the fact that the most valuable characteristics of our national psychology are of Baltic origins, such as general reliability, steadiness, tenacity, dynamism, strong resistance to pressure, mental reserve, etc. We must stress our *baltism*, and not only our slavism." The editorial ends by suggesting a "Federation of Baltic peoples," composed of *Belorussia*, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.[11] One can see how a linguistic, though dilettante, interpretation of a name might possibly alter the political map.

Another explanation of the term "White Russia" has been seen in the fact that *běla, běl'* were words used for money, perhaps because of the white color of silver. Only scant evidence of this exists before the fifteenth century, when we first find that in Novgorod, 1 bela=1 kuna. The Primary Chronicle mentions *běla, běl'* very vaguely. But it appears more frequently in the Lithuanian chronicles (*metriki*), and in documents concerning the Western Dvina region, i.e. the territory more or less connected with present Belorussia.[12] Adjectives often appear as second derivations of a radical which has lost its original meaning, or acquired a special meaning in addition to the original: cf. *zelënyj* (green); *zelen'* (green paint, vegetation); *zelënyj gorod, zelënyj šum, molodo da zeleno* (garden city, rustle of leaves in a forest, young and immature). A sequence: *belyj* (white)—*bel'* (whiteness, silver, coin)—*belyj* (wealthy, rich) would be quite possible; and *belaja Rus'* would mean "the rich, wealthy part of Russia" which would be historically correct for the era in question.

Unfortunately, there are also serious objections to this interpretation. One fails to see how this theory could possibly explain the term "white" as applied to Croats, Huns and Ugrians and, in particular, the term "black" as opposed to "white." Moreover, philologists connect *běla* with Old Slavic *obl*, "round, whole, full," rather than with *belyj*, "white" (*bel'*, *ob'l*, *obel'*, *ob'(e)l'nyi*; cf. Croat: *obal*; Pol.: *obel zupełnie*; Lith.: *ablenas*). Accordingly, *běla*, *běl'* would designate "the full amount" of goods paid in tribute and not "money," and *obel'*, *obel'ny*, "acquired or received in full ownership."[13] Although the latter may have been the case when "full rights of property" were acquired with "money," we do not find "white" or any other derivative of the radical *-běl-* with the meaning "wealthy, rich" in earlier or in later documents; nor is "black" used with the meaning "poor."

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[10] *Kryvič* (Kaunas, 1923), IV, 30. Cf. Lith. *báltas; balù, bálti*, "to appear white."

[11] *Bac'kaŭščyna* (Oberhofer, Germany), II, No. 4 (7) (Feb. 15, 1948), 1. Italics mine.

[12] *Belorusskij Arkhiv*, II, 18, 50.

It is significant that the terms "white" and "black" in connection with present Belorussia did not appear in literature before the fourteenth century, at which time a large part of the Slavic East was conquered by the Tatars. We know that the Asian hordes consisted of three social groups, the "black," the "white," and the "wild" (Vernadsky). The "white" were the ruling clans, the "black" their dependants, and the "wild" presumably represented the heterogeneous and fluid elements that followed the hordes (Vladimircev). The Mongol possessions were divided into "white lands," i.e. those free from duties and services, and "black lands," or those under tribute (Khlebnikov). With this meaning, the expressions "white" and "black" passed from the Orient to the Slavs, and became embedded in their speech.[14]

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[13] A. Vostokov, *Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (1858–61), VI, 25; I. Sreznevskij, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka* (St. Petersburg, 1893–1912), I, 217; E. Karskij, *Russkaja Pravda po drevnejšemu spisku* (Leningrad, 1930), pp. 101, 110.

[14] Cf. Chinese: *li*, *li-min*, *li-yüan*, *li-shu*—black, common people,* the masses, the Chinese people; *pai*, *pai-ku*—white, of white bone, of noble birth. Mong.: *χara*—black; *χara ulus*—common folk*, the masses; *χara kümün*—a common man, poor man, tramp; *qaraču*, *qaračud*—lower classes*; *χaralig*, *χarču*, *χaraču*—common folk, the masses*; *χara üge*—common speech, vernacular; *χara šašin*—black faith, shamanism; *χara jasutai*—of black bone, of humble origin; *čaγan jasutai*—of white bone, of noble origin; *caγan albatu*—white folk, freemen, upper classes; *caγan qaγan*, Manch. *cagan han*—the White Tsar, Russian tsar.

Turkic: *qara*—black, common, of lower classes; *qara halq* (Kas. Dsch.)—common folk*; *qara süöq* (Kir.)—black bone, of humble origin; *qara purt* (Kir.)—common folk*; *qara qul*—common workmen, people; *aq*—white; *aq saqal*—an elder, "Stadtältester"; *aq süöq*—(Kir.) white bone, gentry, nobility; *aq süöqtü*—noble; *aq patsa* (Kir.), *aq patša*—Russian tsar; etc.—cf. also numerous toponymies formed with the word *aq* (white): Aq-Taš, Aq-qaja, Aq-qöi, Aq-mähär, Aq-qöprü, Aq-ova, Aq-abad, Aq-jazy, etc.

*Invariably translated *čern'* in O. Kovalevskij, *Mongol'sko-russko-francuzskij slovar'* (Kazan, 1846), II, 893; III, 2275; K. Golstunskij, *Mongol'sko-russkij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1895), III, 327; D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols depuis Tchingis-Khan jusqu'à Timour Beg ou Tamerlan* (La-Haye, 1834–35); B. Vladimircev, *Obščestvennyj stroj*

In the Slavic East and Byzantium, the expression was known before the Tatar invasion. We have already mentioned White and Black Croats, Huns, Ugrians, Bulgars, Serbs etc., as described by Greek and Russian chroniclers. The Khazars also used the term, and in the same sense. Šarkel, "white house," or "white hostel," was the name given to the residence of the Khazar governor on the Don. Prince Vladimir (990–1015) founded *Belgorod* as a residence for his three hundred concubines who, due to their social status, were not subject to taxation. A number of "white" outposts and towns such as *Belev*, *Belyj*, *Beloe*, *Bel'sk*, *Belostok*, *Beleck*, *Beljany*, *Beloveža* and others, founded at this time and later, began their history as settlements exempt from duties or tribute.

The charter (*jarlyk*) by which the Khans delegated their power to the Russian princes, was called *bel'ěg*‘ (D'jačenko; cf. Vostokov, Miklosich). In the fourteenth century, white eagle, first mentioned in 1230, and white horse (*pahonja*) became symbols of independent Poland and independent Lithuania respectively.[15] Prince Vasilij Dmitrievič of Moscow divided his subjects into the *dan'ščiki*, i.e. those who paid tribute, and *bêl'ščiki*, who were exempt (1392). Afanasij Nikitin, an early Russian traveler, reported that in India all kinds of merchandise were imported *bělo*, "without duties": *vse tovar bělo na beserm'n'skuju zemlju* (1466–72). In the Muscovite State, the word *obelit'*, "to whiten," became a technical term for exemption, and *belaja gramota*, "white charter," was a document legalizing the act of such exemption. Citizens free from taxes and services were distinguished as *belomestcy*, and free peasants as *belosošniki*, or *belopašcy*: cf. *I dade ej Boris belomestnuju gramotu* (And Boris gave her a white resident charter); *Prodal esmi . . . dvor svoj . . . na belom meste ne tjaglom* (I sold . . . my property . . . [located] on a white land exempt from duties.)[16] Non-settled lands owned by

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mongolov (Leningrad, 1934), pp. 118, 168; B. Vladimircev, *Sravnitel'naja grammatika mongol'skogo pis'mennogo jazyka i khalkarskogo narečija* (Leningrad, 1929), p. 325; Radlov, *Opyt slovarja tjurkskikh narečij* (St. Petersburg, 1893), I, 86–96; II, 132–61.

[15] The white horse has a long pedigree of honor and good luck. It was worshipped among Medes and Persians (cf. the worship of the black bull in Egypt) and also by the old Prussians and German barbarians. Slavic tribes in the west offered a white horse to Svjatovit, god of light; a black horse to Triglav, the evil power. Presents of white horses made to kings and princes had been an old custom in both East and West. Odin rides the white horse. At the feast of St. George in Bavaria, the saint rides a horse of purest white, and is followed by six angels (boys) also on white horses. The white horse is a powerful symbol in Berkshire, Wiltshire, Kent, etc.

[16] *Belopašcy* were peasants granted exemption from personal duties for having performed outstanding services to the state. The term appeared at the beginning of the seventeenth century, but was abandoned a few decades later. Among others so favored were the descendants of Ivan Susanin, who gave his life for the Tsar Mikhail Romanov (1613). They were *obeleny* in 1619, and were nicknamed *beljanę* by the peasantry who did not share this privilege.

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

Novgorod and Moscow were called *belovod'e.*[17] Lands exempt from tribute, and particularly Church estates, were known as *belye zemli*, and the clergy exempt from personal taxation were called *beloe, beleckoe, obelennoe*. By extension, men and women living in monasteries before entering the orders, i.e. before giving themselves "in slavery to God," were distinguished as *belec* and *belica*. On the other hand, monks and nuns were known as *černecy*, "black clergy," and wore black gowns and hoods, for they were not free before God in the same sense. Lands under state or city dues and taxes were called *černye, černosošnye zemli*, "black lands," and lower classes under personal taxation and services of various kinds were known as "black people": *čern'*, *černoslobodcy*, *černosošniki*.

In general, Russian comprehensive dictionaries agree that *belyj* was the Old Russian "legal term" for those who did not pay taxes or tribute, and *černyj* for "those who bore the whole burden of state taxes and services." Herberstein thought that Ivan IV was called *White Tsar* by the Orientals because he wore a white cap (*belyj klobuk*), in contrast to the black headgear of Asian monarchs. But the whole land of Muscovy already was known as "white" by the time of Ivan III, the monarch who freed it from the Tatar yoke.

In addition to its technical usage, the term *belyj* assumed a figurative meaning in common speech and literature. We often find it as a synonym of "free" in a general sense, *vol'nyj*; and later as a synonym of "noble." Beginning with the sixteenth century, Russian people called their tsar, their religion and country, *belyj* (Dahl). *Belyj svet, belsvet* meant "freedom wherever you go" (*svoboda na vse četyre storony*), "the whole earth and mankind" (Dahl). *Belyj* is associated with the idea of purity, moral cleanliness, or lofty ideals. Still more often, the association is with special privilege, neatness, idleness and, somewhat ironically, with "blue blood." The best part of the house is called *belaja polovina*, "white part (half)." *Belobiletnik* is the man with a "white ticket," i.e. exempt from military service. *Beloturka*, "noble grain," is the highest quality of wheat; *belošvejka*, a seamstress able to make very fine clothes; *beloručka, beljak*, a man incapable of any kind of manual work, "free to do nothing," a sluggard, a snob.

Most common are expressions *belaja kost'*, "white bone," for people of noble descent, and *černaja kost'*, "black bone," for those of humble origins. One can read of "people of white and black bone" (L. Tolstoy), "black bone students" (Miljukov), and so on. A story prepared by the Soviet officials for use in Berlin schools, and vetoed by American authorities, related the triumph of "the *blackboned*

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[17] The southeastern part of Tomsk province along the Chinese border was described by the same term (*Belovodie*) as late as the nineteenth century. Cf. *Opyt oblastnogo velikorusskogo slovarja* (St. Petersburg, 1852), p. 19.

/2: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

proletariat over the worthless *whiteboned* bourgeoisie."[18] *White bone*, meaning "free status, noble origin, upper class," is still a current idiom in Central Asia, presumably the country of its origins. Finally, the expression was given respectability by the Ušakov Dictionary, which defines it in the following terms: "(ironic.) noble, 'lordly' breed."[19]

The West Russian princes, allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, did not pay tribute to the Tatars, and this was the reason why their country was called white (Dragomanov). Indeed, it is believed that the name "white" was "first given by the Poles to all the Lithuanian possessions torn from the Muscovites" and thus "rescued from the Tatar yoke" (Larned).

The theory is very plausible. But as it stands it does not explain why the western part of White Russia, i.e. the farthest removed from the Tatars, was called "black." Lamanskij observed that lands and people were as overloaded with taxes and services in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as they were in Muscovy, and therefore "white, to them could mean anything but free." Moreover, we know that after the Tatars were defeated in the east, the whole of White Russia became "black" at least from the point of view of the Poles (Potebnja).

The contradictions, however, disappear when the situation is

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[18] Italics mine. The story was entitled "How Lenin and the Tsar Divided the Russian People Between Themselves" (Associated Press, Dec. 1, 1946).

[19] D. Ušakov, and others. *Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1934–41), I, 122. This usage was perhaps responsible for the fact that political terms such as "white army," "white guards," "white emigrants," "white rabble," "white idea," "white front" (*belogvardejcy*, *beloemigranty*, *belaja svoloč'*, *belaja ideja*, *belaja mečta*) and the like, have become so quickly embedded in the vernaculars, although their origin must be sought in French, and not Russian history.

The search could be extended to other Slavic, and non-Slavic idioms, but this would lead far beyond the scope of the present study. Let it suffice to say that association of the color white with ideas of purity, nobleness, freedom and good, is not limited to the Slavs. Among the Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian and Church Slavonic dictionaries consulted, the following are of interest: E. Berneker, *Slavisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1908–13); V. Dahl, *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka* (2nd ed.; St. Petersburg-Moscow, 1912), Vols. I–IV; G. D'jačenko, *Polnyj Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (Moscow, 1900); A. Duvernois, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1894); P. Kalajdovič, *Opyt slovarja russkikh sinonimov* (Moscow, 1818), Vol. I; F. Miklosich, *Lexicon Palaeoslovenico-Graeco-Latinum* (1865–68) and *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der slavischen Sprachen* (Vienna, 1886); A. Preobraženskij, *Etimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1910–16); Akademija Nauk, *Slovar' cerkovno-slavjanskogo i russkogo jazyka* (St. Petersburg, 1847), Vols. I–IV; A. Sokolov, *Obščij cerkovno-slavjano-rossijskij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1854), Vols. I–II; I. Sreznevskij, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka po pis'mennym pamjatnikam* (St. Petersburg, 1893–1912), Vols. I–III; D. Ušakov and others, *Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1934–41), Vols. I–IV; A. Vostokov, *Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1858–61), Vols. I–II.

103 studied in the light of social ideas and structure of that time. People dwelling on the "white lands" were not free in the sense freedom was understood several centuries later. Sometimes they were burdened with taxes and services heavier than the people working on "black lands." The distinction, however, referred not to the nature or amount of duties, but to whom the duties were rendered. Men who sweated for their lord shared in his freedom. Together with him, they formed that little world in itself which could be a principality, an estate, or simply a large household, identical with the Roman *familia* in many respects. As long as the master of their world was also his own master, no matter how rude and tough he might be, his personal position and the status of his possessions could be termed "white." But if his freedom and power were impaired, or restricted by an intruder, and he had to collect duties from his lands for payment to some outside authority, his position and the legal status of his lands were blackened. The outside authority may be a conqueror, the state, or the city. In other words, "black" was used to describe lands and people under taxes and services *to any power other than of patrimonial origin*. Hence *čern'* in the cities of Novgorod and Pskov; and *černye zemli* in the principalities incorporated into the Muscovite State as distinguished from proper patrimonies of the Muscovite princes.

While all of Russia was "blackened" by the Tatar yoke, the West Russian principalities allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania managed to preserve their independence, paying no tribute to either the Tatars or the Lithuanians. Those principalities constituted "White Russia." On the other hand, Russian lands farther west which passed over to the Lithuanian overlords, became known as "Black Russia." By the time Moscow threw off the Tatar yoke and was "white" again, all the Russian lands in the west had fallen under the sway of the Lithuanian Russian State which imposed direct taxes and services upon them. Thus the transition of the whole country from white to black. The name "White Russia" as referring to the Grand Duchy disappeared from documents and literature.

This name was remembered by Moscow in 1667, when the need arose to distinguish the lands ceded by the king of Poland to Russia from the former Muscovite possessions (Treaty of Andrusovo). Tsar Aleksej ordered them to be called *Belaja Rus'*, for they were freed by him from obligations to a "foreign power." But from the point of view of the native, their lands were not "whitened," since one outside authority (Moscow) simply replaced the other (Vilno). The name did not stick. With the partition of Poland, it was revived (1772–95). Catherine II imitated Tsar Aleksej. Provinces "torn away from Russia and returned" were named *Belorussia*, and their administration, the *Belorussian* General Government. After the Polish uprising of 1831, fearing that separatist tendencies might develop in the Lithuanian and Belorussian *gubernii*, the Russian government decided to rename the whole region *West Russia;* and in 1839, the vernaculars were prohibited in churches and schools. Banned from administration, however, "Belorussian" appeared in literature as an ethnographical term. It was also used in Church records to distinguish Russians of Roman Catholic faith from Catholic Poles on the one hand, and from Orthodox Russians on the other.

By the end of the century, the term Belorussian won general recognition in both Russia and Poland. It was translated into foreign languages as "White Russian," and now as "White Ruthenian." To a well-informed European or American there was no difference in these terms. "Ruthenians" is a latinization of the Old Slavic *Rusiny*, first transliterated *Russinen* in the treaty between Prince Mstislav of Smolensk and the City of Riga in 1229. Latin documents used this term indiscriminately for the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the Grand Duke of Moscow: *Rex Litvinorum Ruthenorumque*, and, *Ioannes IV, Rex Ruthenorum*. But well informed Europeans and Americans were few indeed, and it seemed to Belorussian nationalists quite possible that the West might be persuaded to believe that the Ruthenian and Russian were two different races. Thus "White Ruthenian" delegations appeared in the European capitals after the Soviet Revolution, and a memorandum was submitted to the Paris Peace Conference on behalf of the "White Ruthenian Democratic Republic." A group of political emigrants in the United States formed a "White Ruthenian" American National Association in Chicago, Ill., and for some reason changed it later to "White Russian."

Both terms White Ruthenian and White Russian, however, were too close to Russian. This, in the opinion of some Belorussian writers, might seriously hamper the independent development of Belorussian new national self-consciousness and culture. In ancient times, the Kriviči were one of the tribes dwelling on the territory of present Belorussia. Their name sounded far enough from anything Russian, and attempts have been made to substitute the terms *Kryvija*, *Kryviči* and *Kryvian* for "Belorussia," "Belorussians," and "Belorussian" respectively. In 1928, this usage was prohibited in Soviet Belorussia, but it continued sporadically in Western Belorussia (Poland) and abroad. The term *Kryvija*, however, was not generally accepted by the Belorussian separatists. A new attempt to introduce it in literature is being made by a group of political emigrants in Germany (American Zone)

No uniformity in international Belorussian terminology has been

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

103 thus far achieved. The situation became still more complicated with World War II, when the term Belorussia (spelled Byelorussia) began to prevail. In this widespread confusion, the terms "White Russian" and "White Ruthenian" must be, it seems to us, discarded. We do not translate such proper names as Spitzbergen, Lichtenstein, Ukraine, Yugoslavia or Argentina, but have embedded them into English. There is no special reason why we should translate Belorussia.

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111 RCl Belorussia

6: Krushinskii. Vseobshchee Obuchenie V Sovetskoi Belorussii (General Education in Soviet Belorussia), Vol. 5, pp. 68-76. Munich: Vestnik Instituta Po Izucheniiu Istorii Kul'tury SSSR (Munich: Institute for the Study of the History and Culture of the USSR), 1953.

Yale: BW29a.M92V.5-7

Translated from the Russian for HRAF by L. Radoyce

/This is a description of the inadequate educational system that exists in Soviet Belorussia. The author attributes the low attendance rate in elementary schools to the lack of textbooks, fuel, and an insufficient number of school buildings. He emphasizes that, contrary to Soviet propaganda, the political and social pressures upon the teacher are heavy, and leave him little time to concentrate upon the preparation of lessons. --Analyst/

Field date: none
Analyst: June Orloff

Evaluation: Social Scientist-4
Processed in 1955

7: Krushinsky, S. Byelorussian Communism and Nationalism: Personal Recollections. New York: Research Program on the U.S.S.R. (East European Fund, Inc.), April 1953.

Pp. i, 89.

Yale: Bw29A. ‡ Ea7.34.

Translated from the Russian for the Human Relations Area Files by H. Coulter.

[The above work, based on personal recollections, and reasonably objective, provides informative material on the political purges in Belorussia between the two world wars. The author himself "was an official of the Belorussian S.S.R. government..." and has presented the purges as evidence of the persecution and proscription of the Belorussian nationalist movement by the leaders of the All-Union Communist Party in Moscow. His portrayal of the political intrigue practiced by the important Communist Party functionaries in Belorussia is valuable for its insight on Communist administrative techniques.

111 RCl Belorussia--2

7: Krushinsky, S.

Coincident with the material on the purges is significant information on the cultural and intellectual activity in Belorussia between the two world wars, and an introduction to many of her past artistic and political leaders. --Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: Robert Karlowich

Evaluation: Government Official-4, 5
Processed in 1956

111 RCl Belorussia

8: Redmer, Mary. Economic Rehabilitation in Byelorussia. London: UNRRA European Regional Office, Division of Operational Analysis, 1947.

Pp. iv; 56; 17 tables.

Yale: Nvb31. + Un32k. 48.

[This is a study of the Belorussian economy as it was immediately following World War II. The author covers the extent of war damages to agriculture, industry, and homes. Planned production is compared with pre-war and present production. It is the author's aim to show the necessity for the aid that the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) has given to Belorussia in order to rebuild her stricken economy. Basic material for the paper was supplied by the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.--Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: June Orloff

Evaluation: Government Official--4
Processed in 1956

111 RC1 Belorussia

9: American Russian Institute. Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as Amended Through July 11, 1947. New York: American Russian Institute, April, 1950.

Pp. iii; 16

Yale: Osf23+950c.5

[This is a translation, without comment, of a Russian text published by the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian SSR in 1947. Similarities and differences among the various constitutions of the Sixteen Constituent Republics of the USSR are discussed in source 70: American Russian Institute, R1 Soviet Union, category 116. --Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: June Orloff

Processed in 1955

12: Vakar, Nicholas P. The Name "White Russia." The American Slavic and East European Review, Vol. VIII, pp. 201-213. New York: Columbia University Press, 1949.

Yale: A89. AM35795. 8-9

[This study discusses in great detail the possible etymology of the term "White Russia." The author suggests that in order to avoid confusion the name Belorussia should remain untranslated. Incidental information about the social classes in historical Belorussia is interspersed throughout the article. -- Analyst]

Field date: none
Analyst: June Orloff

Evaluation: Unknown - 4
Processed in 1955

113, 642 Belorussia RC1

[For comparisons of the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as amended through July 11, 1947, with other constitutions of the Sixteen Constituent Republics of the USSR, see 70: American Russian Institute, R1 Soviet Union, category 116.]

• 113, 19 Belorussia RCl

[For information pertaining to the Belorussian languages, see 22: Matthews, Rl Soviet Union, category 116; pp. 117-118.]

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Soviet News	Published by the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy, London.
UNRRA Reports and Cables	Sent by the UNRRA Mission to the B.S.S.R. to the UNRRA Offices in Washington and London.
UNRRA Journal	

103 thus far achieved. The situation became still more complicated with World War II, when the term Belorussia (spelled Byelorussia) began to prevail. In this widespread confusion, the terms "White Russian" and "White Ruthenian" must be, it seems to us, discarded. We do not translate such proper names as Spitzbergen, Lichtenstein, Ukraine, Yugoslavia or Argentina, but have embedded them into English. There is no special reason why we should translate Belorussia.

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GENERAL EDUCATION IN SOVIET BELORUSSIA

871 The development of Soviet schools in the Belorussian SSR during the first decade of Soviet rule took a somewhat different path from that in the other parts of the Soviet Union. Until 1921, Belorussia was an arena of wars and occupation, first German and then Polish. If the Council of Peoples Commissaries of the RSFSR decreed on August 21st, 1923, that the preparation of a project for general education should be undertaken, in the BSSR such a decree was issued only three years later, on April 7th, 1926. In the RSFSR lower and upper division schools were organized from the very beginning. In Belorussia the public schools adopted a seven year program which was separated into two divisions: the lower, comprising the first to fourth grades (the elementary school) and the upper, comprising the fifth to seventh grades. Technical schools of various specialties with four years of training included secondary education and paved the way to higher institutions of learning. The pernicious experiments of the State Learned Council of the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR affected the schools of Belorussia to a lesser degree. The People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR was headed by the intelligent pedagogue V. Ignatovskii, professor at the Teachers' Institute. His pedagogical experience and knowledge of public schools did not allow Professor Ignatovskii to take the road of careless school reforms. In 1929 he was accused [661] of national democratism, and committed suicide. In 1930, widespread arrests of educators took place. Several experienced pedagogues in the People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR were also arrested. After 1930, the original conservatism in matters concerning the schools of Belorussia was liquidated, and in the course of two to three years the schools assumed the monotonous Soviet form.

The Second World War quite definitely put an end to this chaotic educational regime in the Soviet schools and for many years [727] hampered the "completion" of general education. School affairs in Belorussia suffered particularly during the German occupation. Only through the great efforts and self-sacrificing work of Belorussian public workers and the local population, was it possible to arrange for work in schools and even to organize teachers' seminars during the war.

during the war.

Representatives of Soviet authority in their talks, the press, as well as in the propaganda which they disseminate, constantly claim that all the domains of industry, agriculture and culture in the USSR have not only been fully restored but have even surpassed the pre-war level.

"After the victorious end of the great patriotic war the school system was quickly restored. Universal general compulsory education lasting for seven years has been introduced since 1949 and is supposed to be carried out in the course of three years." (Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Èntsiklopediia / Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, vol. 9, p. 316).

But what in reality is the condition of the schools in Soviet Belorussia? One can judge the activity of the schools by the articles and notes, not particularly numerous, which usually appear in the Soviet papers toward the beginning and end of the school year. In these articles considerable space is devoted to /68/ dithyrambs addressed to the Communist Party and the Soviet government on their "constant care for national education". Very great successes and achievements in the work of the schools are also commented upon. But the real, far from comforting, situation in the restoration of schools is nevertheless to be detected in the newspaper notes. Here are some examples. The organ of the Communist Party of Belorussia, Zviazda, in its leading article of June 9th, comments: "The low level of success of students in Russian, Belorussian and mathematics is recorded every year in many rayons, oblast's, and even throughout the Republic. It is necessary to analyze the work of schools and teachers thoroughly, to reveal the real reasons for the low level of success in many schools. In a number of oblast's from year to year the law of general education is not being enforced".

The same paper, in its issue of August 8th, on the eve of the school year, demands insistently from all Party, soviet, trade union and other organizations that they "should see that the law of general education is fully enforced. Local soviets and school directors need to verify the lists of children subject to education once again."

In the current year, the Ministry of National Education of the BSSR has already conducted an inspection of the enforcement of

871 the general education law in the Mogilevskaya and Baranovicheskaya oblast'. The inspection revealed the far from comforting state of general education in these oblast's. In the majority of the rayons of the oblast's which were inspected the registration of school age children is conducted very carelessly, and in some places registration is utterly absent (the Kamenskiy village soviet of the Kletskiy rayon). The population areas covered by some of the schools are not determined, and for that reason these schools have no responsibility for the registration of children. Also, there is no account of the reasons for long absences and general failure to attend school. It has been determined that merely in the Liakhovicheskiy rayon of the Baranovicheskaya oblast' for unexplained reasons no more than 90 children are being taught. As a result of the surveys, the lowest attendance of schools has been found in the Shklovskiy, Mstislavskiy, Khotimskiy, Novomyshskiy, Ivetskiy, Kletskiy, Bytenskiy, and other rayons. "In every one of these rayons some 100 and more children do not attend school", notes the Uchitel'skaia Gazeta on its pages of October 17th, 1953. More than 200 rayons can be counted in Soviet Belorussia, which means that more than 20,000 children are not attending school.

How can one explain the fact that children leave school for a time and often do not attend it at all? On the other hand, how explain the indulgence on the part of the Soviet authorities towards a population which is not abiding by the law of general education? The reasons are very simple. There are no special funds at the schools for offering help to children in obtaining clothes and footwear, no means are provided for the preparation of hot breakfasts. There are no living quarters for students at the schools, and transportation is not arranged for those living far from school. Soviet authority, with all its severity regarding the execution of its decrees, cannot "oblige" and force the barefooted, poorly dressed and hungry children of kolkhozniks to attend school in rain and in the severe winter weather. Soviet authority has declined to fulfill the obligation decreed in 1918 and confirmed by the Soviet government act of August 14th, 1930, "On general compulsory education". It refuses to offer state assistance to school children. This is why general education is not carried out in the schools.

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871 /70/ The success of school work depends on many things and to a considerable degree on conditions of training. For successful

training, preservation of the health of students, and for their normal physical development, dry, warm, sunny, spacious classrooms with a sufficient amount of fresh air are necessary. During the war the school buildings in Belorussia were almost completely destroyed. Only ruins remained of large cities. But in smaller towns and villages the school buildings with rare exceptions were preserved at the beginning of the war. Later, however, with the development of partisan warfare in Belorussia, schools, hospitals, restored churches and other public buildings were, at the order of Moscow, completely burned by the partisans. This senseless barbarity caused great damage to the Belorussian people and its younger generation. Schools in villages were of no strategic importance and could not have been used by the Germans for military purposes. Part of the school buildings were destroyed together with the villages in various German maneuvers during the battles with partisans. We have already mentioned that Soviet propaganda claims that what was destroyed by the war has been restored, and that includes schools. Unfortunately, a wide discrepancy exists between Soviet propaganda and reality. The construction of schools in the BSSR is in an intolerable state, and the results of the "peaceful socialist construction" are far from comforting. This is proved by the scanty information which is appearing in the Soviet press. "The fact that the plan for the large-scale construction of school buildings and putting them to use has not been fulfilled year after year, can no longer be tolerated", writes Zviazda of May 31st, this year. One fact which attracts attention is the failure of school construction as a generally Belorussian phenomenon and furthermore an annual, therefore a constant one. It is reported in the paper that "the Polesskaya oblast' did not fulfill the plan for using the means assigned for the construction of schools: 18. 5 per cent in 1950, 23. 5 per cent in 1951, and 39, 3 per cent in 1952.The percentage of "exploitation" of the means for the construction of schools in the Polesskaya oblast' has been constantly decreasing for the last three years. In 1952, 40 per cent of the projected schools were not built. The Polesskaya oblast' is no exception: schools are not being built in the Molodechinskaya, Bobruiskaya, Vitebskaya or Polotskaya oblast's either. In the Polotskaya oblast' "of the two million rubles released by the government for the planned construction of schools, only 30 per cent has been used". The paper Zviazda of June 3rd of this

346 871 year notes that 466 thousand rubles were assigned for the construction of the Vetrinskaya school in the Polotskaya oblast', but only 195,000 rubles have been used so far, and that not advantageously. Unsuitable brick was supplied, which was used in the building of walls. When the builders noticed it, 25,000 bricks had to be torn down and new bricks used for rebuilding the walls. In this way at least 35 to 40 per cent of the means annually assigned for building schools is not used. This means that it is not enough to have Soviet rubles in store: school buildings must be assured of labor power and building material. And the schools are the last of all to receive these advantages. Financial means, labor power and building material are first assigned to constructions of military significance, as the Soviet rulers know very well.

Apart from the state constructions, there exists in villages the [474] so-called "method of the people's construction". This method is very simple. Beside many other economic campaigns the kolkhozniks /71/ of a rayon are bound to build with their own efforts and means several schools, clubs, reading rooms, bridges, etc. The paper Zviazda quotes as an example the Sharkovskiy rayon in the Polotskaya oblast', which accepted the obligation to build at the beginning of the school year, by the "method of the people's construction", five seven-grade and one elementary School, to expand the school capacity to one thousand student seats, carry out thorough repairs in six schools and less general repairs in forty-two schools. We have no information as to the way the kolkhozniks of the Sharkovskiy rayon fulfilled this colossal program. If with a budget of hundreds of thousand of rubles and with building material and labor power at the disposal of the rayon executive committees the building of schools goes on for several years, one wonders whether kolkhozniks with the "method of the people's construction" will be able to enrich the rayon at their own cost with six new seven-grade schools, expand the school capacity to one thousand seats, and repair all the schools in the rayon. Judging by the pace of the work in constructing schools, Belorussian children will have to study reading and writing in inadequate, cold, restricted schoolrooms for many years to come.

The Soviet authority has assigned the fuel supply and maintenance of schools in country localities to the local population. In the usual confusion and without any organization or building material, schools are not being repaired and are deteriorating. In a number of rayons,

according to the reports of the newspapers, preparation and delivery [346
of fuel for schools had not started even in August, shortly before the 871
beginning of the school year.

The success of training in schools is also conditioned by prompt and sufficient provision of students with textbooks, instruments, writing accessories, well equipped and completed physical, chemical and biological school laboratories and libraries. Several Soviet organizations, independent of each other, are engaged in providing students with textbooks in the BSSR. For this reason the textbooks, instruments and writing acessories have to travel a long way before they reach school shelves or bookstores.

"Books are left lying for a long time at the editor's and proof- [214]
reader's in the publishing house, they are held up even at the typesetter's. Almost-finished products lie for two and more months at the sewing and binding establishments. All this means that the established norm for the work on textbooks is not fullfilled from one month to another... A considerable number of textbooks is held up because of the shortage of maps and the unsatisfactory organization of the productive process of publication and typography. Books concerned with methodology are being published particularly slowly: Out of 46 such titles which were planned, only 5 have been printed." (Zviazda of May 21st, current year).

Colossal sums are being expended for the printing of various propaganda material, as well as publications designed for foreign countries. This material is made up with special care and luxury. The appearance of the textbooks designed for Soviet schoolchildren is quite different.

"Textbooks are printed on poor paper, covers are smeared with printer's ink. The work of the sewing and binding divisions of the printing press is of a particularly low quality. Many books, even if they are most carefully treated, soon break and fall apart." (Zviazda, April 25th of this year). /72/

The most indispensable tools and products are absent from the school laboratories. The laboratories of provincial and country schools are especially poor. The teaching of physics, chemistry and natural sciences is reduced to a study without experiments and examples. The situation of the school libraries is no better: they are mostly oversupplied with Soviet political literature, while the classics are unavailable. School furniture consists of an assortment of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

Soviet propaganda falsely claims that the Soviet teacher has been raised to a level upon which the teacher in the capitalist society did not, does not and could not be, that the teacher is the central figure in the school. In fact, however, the Soviet teacher is the teacher with the fewest rights and least security in the world. The teaching ranks in Belorussia have several times been subjected to investigations and purges, thousand of teachers were arrested and deported to concentration camps. The older generation of teachers who survived the First World War and came back to their schools were immediately placed under suspicion by the Soviet authority. They were not trusted , they were considered enemies of Soviet projects. Teachers in cities and villages were subjected to mass arrests during the nineteen-thirties at the time of the suppression of the national democratic movement in Belorussia. Not only the old teachers, but also the young ones, those who had completed the Belorussian university, the pedagogical institutes, were sent to concentration camps in far-away Siberia upon the slightest suspicion of national tendencies. Teacher-experts in regional studies, collectors of folk songs, fables, proverbs, etc., were the ones who suffered particularly. They were all put together with the national democrats, [661] the "enemies of the people". The persecution of the years 1936-1938 definitively liquidated all those who were valuable and intellectual in the teaching profession. Thousands of teachers, male and female, were killed during the war. Those who survived and remained on the territory occupied by the Germans were, once the Soviet authority returned, subjected to cruel punishment and mass deportation from the regions of Belorussia. There are at the present time many vacant teaching positions in the schools. Thus, in the Bobruiskaya oblast'" ... it has become a commonplace fact that schools, children's homes, and rayon sections of national education remain without directors for several months. In the Klichevskiy rayon, for example, one can count eleven people temporarily performing the duties of directors and in charge of teaching in the schools. (Zviazda of May 23rd of this year).

A considerable number of teachers is inexperienced, without special pedagogical preparation, with a feeble general background and cultural development. The inspectors of the schools explain the failure of seven-grade school students by the existence of a large

number of "elevated" teachers. If under Soviet conditions, institutions are managed by non-specialists, then why could not elementary school teachers without an adequate knowledge be "elevated" into the post of lecturer at secondary schools? It has been proved that such "elevation" is practiced in Soviet schools. Therefore, it is not an accident that the knowledge of secondary school students is far from corresponding with the program of instruction and that there also are many who have to repeat a year. In the Klichev secondary school, for example, every fourth student "fails". (Zviazda May 23rd, this year). From these examples it is obvious that the majority of Soviet school teachers lack extensive, systematic study in the acquisition of pedagogical and, to a considerable degree, general knowledge. 875

The Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ministry of Education of the BSSR is called upon to study progressive methods of instructive and educative work, to give directives to the oblast' institutes in the task of improving the teachers. [647]

"Those few works which deal with the teaching experience which have been prepared and published by the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy, are of an informative character they are not profound in their content, and they lack scientific basis." (Zviazda August 4th, this year).

The oblast' institutes of improvement do not enjoy authority among the teachers. The function of these institutes is to analyze and generalize the best examples of the pedagogical work of teachers and then to introduce them in the schools.

"The people working at the Polotskiy Institute generally do not have a serious attitude towards their obligations. Teachers from the town and the oblast' do not feel that the Institute is improving teachers to the point of active leadership, or that it is actually helping them in their work", - this is how Ozernikov, a teacher from the town of Polotsk, characterizes the work of the Institute. (Zviazda, July 1st, 1953).

The immediate direction of school affairs is carried out by the rayon sections of national education through the appropriate inspectorship. The school inspector is the official state controller of the methods of school instruction, but he is also expected to help teachers with questions of instruction and education. But "in the apparatus of particular rayon sections of national education, and 871-875

871 even in those of the oblast', there are often people who have no
875 adequate pedagogical experience or even any education. Moreover, people who have nothing to do with pedagogy, who turned up by chance, people who are not conscientious, often hold leading teaching positions." This is how Zviazda of July 9th, this year, characterizes the administrative workers who are directing the schools in the Belorussian Soviet Republic.

875 The legal position of the Soviet teacher is unbearably difficult,
554 particularly in villages. He is presented with many demands of all kinds, and at the same time no one accepts him. A great deal of additional social work is laid upon him, and at the same time he has no rights. The teacher must necessarily be an "active citizen, a public worker". The activity and public spirit of the teacher is determined by the local Party and soviet authority, which is in most cases uncultured, limited, and often stubborn. The teacher, according to established procedure, is obliged as an active citizen to participate in all of the numerous gatherings which bear absolutely no relation to school matters; he is expected to express himself in a spirit favorable to the local authority at these gatherings. Arranging the program of all gatherings is also his responsibility. The active teacher has to be a regular visitor of the reading rooms, the club, the red corner, the office of the village soviet, the office of the kolkhoz direction, etc; the visits to these village institutions are usually not connected with necessity or real interest. The teacher must /74/ be a member of all soviet organizations and societies; he abolishes illiteracy, must help in the preschool education, collect signatures for loans. Without his participation the bulletin-board newspaper does not appear. Teachers are being induced to participate not only in political but also in economic campaigns, such as the collection of taxes in kind--of grain, potatoes, milk, salvage, and scrap metal--often at the expense of their regular work at the school. The teacher is expected to be a "militant atheist", to read lectures on anti-religious themes and at the time of great holidays to organize anti-religious demonstrations, games and parades with the students. During election campaigns the teacher is the duty-bound propagandist and agitator for the candidates sponsored by the Communist Party. The president of the village soviet, the kolkhoz and especially the secretary of the local Party cell may call on the teacher at any time to fulfill

various obligations nowhere defined, order that the work at school 875 be discontinued for the purpose of organizing some gathering, etc. 554 Every disobedience, protest and especially withdrawal from this so-called social work is fraught with unpleasant consequences for the village teacher who has no rights. He will be labelled antisocial, a saboteur; he will be "dealt with" at public gatherings, in newspapers which are posted and even in the rayon paper, all this without any regard for the safeguarding of the teacher's authority among the students at the school in which he works. Under such conditions can the teacher find time to prepare for his duties at school, carefully draw up his plan of work, accurately correct written assignments of the students, have time for self-instruction and outside training? It is not an accident, then, that in the Bobruiskaya oblast', out of 429 teachers who had registered for outside training in the Pedagogical Institute only 284 completed the plan of study. In fact, the teacher is placed in a position, deprived of rights, in which he "did not, does not, and could not be" in any state regime except the Soviet.

With such a deplorable composition of the teaching cadres, 871 with their superficial professional and general educational level, one should not expect a correct and successful organization of the pedagogical process in the Soviet school. If, furthermore, one considers the abnormal and often unbearable conditions under which students have to study and teachers have to perform their pedagogical duties, it becomes clear why the law concerning general education is not observed. The frequent cases of students who leave school before their time, failures en masse, a shocking decline of grades, with a low level of the knowledge of subjects studied in school, are not surprising.

Last year the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party 873 issued the following resolution: 871

"The transition from seven-year education to general secondary education (a ten year program) should be completed at the end of the five-year plan in the capitals of the republics, in the subordinate cities of the republics, in the oblast', krai and large industrial centers. Conditions for the full realization of general secondary education (the ten year program) during the next five-year plan should be prepared in other towns and villages."

The Congress also considered it necessary to introduce

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polytechnical instruction in the secondary schools and to initiate measures essential for the transition to general polytechnical education. For to bring about general secondary education in the entire Soviet /75/ Union, will require many years of intelligent serious planning, to ensure the possibility of realizing this very important measure, and large material expenditures beside the Soviet paper rubles. The "completion" of the process of realizing a general seven-year education throughout the country has been going on since 1939, that is, for more than fourteen years. Innumerable facts prove that even the seven-year education is in many cases fictitious, and even the Soviet press does not conceal it. On September 1st of this year, on the day of the beginning of school, the newspaper Izvestiia, after a considerable doese of enthusiasm over the successes of the Soviet school, could not help admitting the following:

"The realization of the transition to secondary education presupposes a universal and strict carrying out of the general seven-year education. But, is the latter organized everywhere? No, unfortunately not everywhere. In the last year in a number of oblast's and rayons not all of the children and adolescents were taught; part of the students left school before the end of the seven-year course. Schools, divisions of national education and executive committees reconciled themselves to this. The preliminary results of the last school year prove that in many schools the level of success of the students is still low, while in a number of rayons there is even some increase in the number of repeaters."

871 There is no need to repeat the reasons for the unfavorable state of instruction in Soviet schools. Schools, like the other domains under Soviet management, suffer from an incurable disease, the source of which is the depraved Soviet system. Such high cultural aims as the transition to a ten-year general education of the children of school age cannot be achieved within one five-year plan. The decision of the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party served a propaganda purpose and will have no practical significance over the course of many years.

The transition of schools to polytechnical instruction has better chances of being realized even in a comparatively short time. Polytechnical reform is not a new thing in Soviet schools. Experiments with polytechnical reforms have taken place before, but the

work did not go beyond the students' cutting sticks for colors, etc. From all indications, the present polytechnical reform was conceived somewhat differently. It will be conducted from above, from the senior classes of the ten-year and even seven-year schools. Soviet authority is interested in preparing qualified cadres of workers. Workers are needed in factories and mills, in kolkhozes, and sovkhozes and at machine and tractor stations. Technical cadres are also very much needed in the Soviet army. And it is to train qualified cadres that the polytechnical reform will be adopted in senior classes of secondary and seven-year schools so as to organize practical work for students in factories and mills for those in cities, and in the workshops of machine and tractor stations and in Kolkhozes and sovkhozes for those in villages. Two aims will be achieved: qualified workers will come out of schools, and during the period of training, millions of adolescents will be used on the works of projects and on the farms. Preparation for the polytechnical reform is already being carried out. The Minister of Education of the RSFSR, Kairov, in his speech of August 10th of this year, spoke of the necessity of reviewing textbooks and programs, "as they are overabundant in second-rate material on geography, history and literature." More than 70 school textbooks are subject to review. The newspaper Pravda of August 18th of this year, in the article "On the Eve of a New School Year" also notes that one of the/76/ worst defects in the work of schools is the overburdening of students, which negatively affects the course of instruction and the education of the children". The Soviet press points also to the illiteracy of students and their poor mastery of the native tongue and of mathematics. The reduction of the programs will, of course, not affect the political curriculum, and the programs of mathematics, physics and chemistry will not be reduced either. The programs of literature, history, geography and other disciplines of the humanities will be reduced to the minimum. Secondary school will approach trade school with the compulsory practical work on projects and farms; the study of exact sciences will be enforced. It is in this light that the new tendency of instruction in Soviet secondary schools is foreseen.

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BYELORUSSIAN COMMUNISM AND NATIONALISM: PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

by

S. Krushinsky

121 Western literature on the Soviet Union is strikingly bereft of material on both the "nationalist deviations" in the U. S. S. R. and the workings of the Communist Party on the local and regional levels. The present manuscript is intended as a contribution toward providing the student with material for filling this gap.

The author provides an account of Byelorussian political life between the two wars, covering many problems not heretofore elucidated in Western literature. The intensified Soviet campaign against "bourgeois nationalists" since the second World War assumes new significance in the light of evidence presented here on similar purges and campaigns antedating the recent drive by many years. In Byelorussia the anti-nationalist campaign affected both Communist nationalists and non-Communist separatists, decimating a considerable part of the national intelligentsia.

The manuscript is based exclusively on the author's personal recollections. It is not the product of research, if only because of the striking lack of printed sources on much of the material which the author covers. It is offered merely as raw material for the Western researcher. While an effort has been made to spot check verifiable dates and events, the manuscript must be considered unedited. In particular, the author's political views are entirely his own and do not necessarily represent those of the sponsoring organization. However, it has seemed proper to present the manuscript in its original form as a contribution toward a hitherto neglected subject.

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Belorussian Communism and Nationalism -- Personal Recollections

S. Krushinskii

Introduction: 1917-1920

668 The February Revolution of 1917 must be considered the turning point in the history of the Belorussian national movement. From the first days of the revolution there took place throughout all of Belorussia, especially in the future capital, Minsk, various congresses, conferences, and meetings in which, besides discussion of special questions, the problem of the future destiny of the area and its state structure occupied a position of by no means minor importance. All along the enormous front, in Petrograd, the Baltic Fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, in Odessa, and in other places, Belorussian officers and soldiers organized their own national committees and unions in, as it were, an answering echo to the activities in the homeland. Belorussians on the front were very interested in the political doings at home. Subsequently most of those who had organized committees at the front occupied prominent positions in national work at home.

Post-revolutionary events and the national questions raised by the masses required solutions and the acceptance of some kind of decisions. Searching for a solution, the political leaders of the time came to the conclusion that only a congress of delegates elected by the whole nation would be authorized properly to determine the form of the state structure of Belorussia, and likewise to resolve the most pressing post-revolutionary questions.

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The First All-Belorussian Congress convened in Minsk from the eighteenth to the thirty-first of December, 1917. Of the delegates present 1,167 had a deciding voice and 705 a consultative voice. However the Congress did not finish its work and on December 30th was dispersed by armed units of Bolsheviks. The Congress passed on its powers for the conduct of further work to the Rada of the Belorussian National Republic, then and there elected at the Congress. The Rada chiefly utilized the underground to carry on its work under the difficult conditions of war and the Bolshevik terror. In its session of March 25, 1918, the Rada passed a resolution of historic importance for the Belorussian nation, known as the Manifesto of March 25. In the Manifesto it was stated that "Belorussia declares itself to be an independent National Republic."

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101 The Bolshevik regime took away the independence of the Belorussian nation by force. The region was first occupied by the Germans, and in 1919 and 1920 it became the arena of the savage and devastating Soviet-Polish War which came to an end only in November , 1920. The peace treaty which the Soviets and the Poles signed in Riga was tragic for Belorussia. In it a nation of eighteen million(1) was dismembered into three parts:

> 1. According to other estimates the Belorussian nation at that time numbered not 18 but 20 and even 24 million persons.

about four million /2/ Belorussians were given by the Bolsheviks to Poland who, during her existence as a state tried, rashly but unsuccessfully, by every kind of intolerable method to turn Belorussians into Poles and Catholics. The Communist dictatorship was established over the remaining Belorussian territory. But even that remaining under the Communists was subdivided into two parts. Out of the six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya (1) the Belorussian Soviet

> 1. The six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya comprised the Minskoy, Borisovskiy, Igumenskiy, Bobrugskiy, Slutskiy, and Mozyrskiy uyezd.

Socialist Republic (B. S. S. R.) was organized. The Vitebskaya, Mogilevskaya, and newly organized Gomel'skaya Guberniya remained included in Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic
644 (R. S. F. S. R.). The six uyezds of the B. S. S. R. represented a very convenient base for the postwar struggle with Poland. Starting in the very first days after the conclusion of peace with Poland, the Soviets used every means to try and arouse discontent and alarm among the population, especially the Belorussians, who had been left in the power of Poland. The Soviets also attempted to undermine the Polish economy which was rather weak. To this end armed units of the G. P. U. were organized in the border regions of Belorussia and sent into Western Belorussia. These units plundered and burned estates, murdered and executed policemen and government officials. A certain Mukha, the leader of one of these units, was particularly renowned. These "insurgents" always had a place of

648 refuge on Soviet territory, and meanwhile Soviet propaganda interpreted the "exploits" of Mukha and other units as the anger of the Belorussians nation against capitalist Poland. From the B. S. S. R. special propagandistic literature was sent into western Belorussia, as were Communists prepared for underground work who carried on propaganda there as well as organizing Communist and Komsomol cells. Nor did the Poles remain in their debt. They also organized units and forays into the territory of Soviet Belorussia where they ravaged the revisional committees and the village soviets, in some cases not disdaining to conduct pogroms of the Jews. The raids which were made upon the towns of Kopyl' and Koydanov in the Minskaya oblast' are well known . . .

668 The destructive war and the Bolshevik terror greatly weakened the national forces of Belorussia. A significant part of the active political workers who had taken part in the all-Belorussian Congress and in the further work of creating an independent National Republic were forced to emigrate across the border. /3/ Only a few individuals remained in Belorussia and their number was somewhat augmented by those who returned from the front. At the time, the national-democratic intellegentsia estimated the political situation correctly. The Kremlin and Poland were pursuing their own political ends, which were completely foreign to the interests of the Belorussian nation. Warsaw had set itself the goal of turning Belorussians into Poles in the shortest possible period. And Moscow had destined Belorussia to be a convenient ground for the preparation of its own specific measures towards the quickest possible Communist revolution in the West and as a first step in neighboring Poland. Belorussian national forces could not reconcile themselves to such a destiny for their country. Immediately after the Soviet-Polish War there were attempts to preserve their independence by armed force. The famous Slutskiy uprising broke out in the end of 1920; more than ten thousand fighters for freedom and liberty took part in it. The Slutskiy uprising was quelled by the overwhelming strength of the Red Army. Belorussia was then covered with a thick net of partisan units, some of which resisted until as late as 1930. A correct appraisal of the situation led the Belorussian national leaders to the decision to elect the path of lengthy, painstaking, and patient work within the B. S. S. R. , involving the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses and the preparation of young cadres for active work. When the Bolsheviks were forced to give up

668 'War Communism' which brought with it hunger and disorganization, and enter upon the New Economic Policy, many were filled with hopes of a regeneration of the Soviet power...

> Editors Note: the sub-titles of this article are in English in the original Russian text. They have been copied here, except for any reference to the Ezhovshchina which is spelt Yezhovshchina in the original and which we spell Ezhovshchina.

Educational Campaign in Belorussia

Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii played a leading role in the Belorussian national movement. He was the People's Commissar of Public Education of the BSSR (1). A group of archive nationalists united around Professor Ignatovskii with whom a whole series of cultured and prominent public figures sympathized and who aided in the national work, although for various reasons they did not want to become openly involved. In the first place, it was necessary to bring out the nationally thinking intelligentsia which had been dispersed throughout the farthest corners of the province, having been driven from the cities in search of food during the time of famine in the cities. It was necessary to open and organize upper and middle s schools /4/ and prepare the youth for work in all fields of the national economy and culture. The narrow circle of leaders of the movement arrived at what seems at first sight to have been a strange conclusion: not to obstruct conscious young members of the intellegentsia from entering the Communist Party, even to suggest the idea and in some cases compel them to become Party members. It was considered that Belorussians, especially the intellegentsia, in the Party, would the more quickly reach leading positions in the Party and the administrative apparatus, and it was supposed that the national aims would be realized sooner and more successfully through the Party.

(1) At first V. Ignatovskii was for a short while the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R. of his biography in the Literaturnaya Entsiklopediya /Literary Encyclopedia/ by the Communist Academy, 1930, p. 417.

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668 The People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belo-
24 russia /Narkompros/ became the headquarters of activity. Here follows a short schematic description of the most important measures taken up until 1930. The Narkompros took measures to have the instruction in all schools translated into the native language. This was difficult work since the schools did not have textbooks in the native language, the lack of elementary readers in the primary schools being a particularly difficult obstacle to overcome. However in a comparatively short period old and experienced teachers compiled some elementary readers modeled upon the literary styles of Belorussian writers, and a famous Belorussian linguist compiled a school grammar of the native language (1).

> 1. Ia. Lesik compiled a school textbook of the Belorussian language; the first normative grammar of Belorussian on a scientific basis, adapted simultaneously for use in schools had been issued in 1918 by the Belorussian philologist, V. Tarashkevich, long before Lesik.

The majority of the presses in Belorussia had been destroyed during the war and in any case, they were not suitable for mass publication of textbooks. During the course of a year some textbooks were printed in Germany and a few in Wilno under the direction of the well known writer D. Zhilunovich who was a member of the collegium of Narkampros. He subsequently reorganized the publishing business and the presses in Minsk. With contemporary techniques, the work which he accomplished would not seem to be very great, but in those times, against a background of general devastation, it was quite an accomplishment.

871 Normal schools were opened in Minsk and a number of
666 other cities. The one in Minsk played a particularly positive role. It was staffed with the best teachers, and during the twenties was named after Professor Ignatovskii. The education in these normal schools was directed toward the preparation of teachers who were also politically active nationalists. Their graduates subsequently devoted themselves, with great success, to the cultural rebirth of their nation. /5/ Many of them finished universities, and out of the former pupils of the Minsk normal school there developed a number of talented poets and writers. To fill the great lack of teachers of

668 the Belorussian language one-year courses were made available in
87/ the secondary schools. These courses remained available, as a provisional measure, for all, up to regular graduates of the pedagogical department of the Belorussian University. Taken all together these measures made it possible as early as the beginning of the academic year of 1924, to change the curriculum to the native language in schools, kindergartens, adult evening schools, and stations for the liquidation of illiteracy.

563 Parallel with the Belorussianization of the schools Narkompros[1]
87 took practical steps to guarantee their own languages to the schools of the national minorities. The work among the Jewish population was particularly successful. The special Jewish inspectors of Narkompros, and in the neighboring towns as well, worked intensively to open schools, kindergartens, orphan homes and libraries for the Jewish population. This great task was not always accomplished smoothly, and thus aroused some dissatisfaction against the zealous promulgators of the national policy. Under the new system parents did not have a free choice of schools for their children; besides, in the cities and especially among the Jewish intelligentsia, only Russian was spoken in the family, and the children experienced great difficulty in learning Hebrew when they got to the Jewish national schools. Then, in addition, after completing a Jewish secondary school they had a very limited choice of higher schools for further education. A thorough knowledge of Russian was necessary to pass the entrance examinations into an institution of higher learning outside Belorussia, and in the Belorussian university itself there was only one Jewish subdivision (section) in the educational department where the lectures were given in Hebrew. Therefore some parents went to work in the R.S.F.S.R. or sent their children to school there, and thus the Jewish secondary schools, especially the upper classes, were not full, having three to five pupils in a class. Nevertheless the work accomplished was great and fully responded to the national feelings of the masses among whom Zionistic tendencies still existed. Among the special normal schools in Belorussia were the pedagogical academy in Gomel' which had instruction in Hebrew, and the agricultural technical school in Kurasovshchina, not far from Minsk. Jewish children were fully assured of having seven-year schooling and even secondary schooling in some cities. Homeless orphans were collected in Jewish orphan asylums, and there were a sufficient number of kindergartens. /6/

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

563 Less significant was the network of educational institutions where
87/ the teaching was done in Polish, although in Narkompros there were special inspectors for Polish schools. The reasons for this situation will be told below.

873 Narkompros[1] directed particular attention to the organization and development of the Belorussian State University. Through a common effort this young cultural center established a serious course of study and acquired a well-deserved prestige. In a comparatively short time a solid group of well-known professors had been chosen, among them the following Belorussian scholars: the popular and generally respected philologist Ia. Lesik, the mathematician Krutalevich, Piotukhovich, who was a literary specialist, Shchekotikhin, who was a professor of art, as well as others. It should be noted that the first graduates of the University, in 1931 and 1932, were better than the later ones. The reason is that despite the rather difficult conditions of student life they were not distracted into other pursuits. They were required to learn, not to participate in various bombastic political campaigns and social undertakings, which were the affair of the Communist Party. Afterwards, unfortunately, the examinations of student activists were judged according to their participation in
66/ political campaigns. A prominent role in the administrative organization of the University was played by the rector, Professor Picheta, a man who had been very successfully selected for this high post. Although not a Belorussian himself, he worked actively and conscientiously to promulgate all measures necessary for strengthening the University. He was arrested in 1930 and, like many others who were arrested that same year, subjected to "investigation" because of a "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" (the S. V. B. - in Belorussian "Sayuz Vyzvalen'nya Belorusi"), which was created at the time by the G. P. U. of the B. S. S. R. More will be said about this below. In the activity of the S. B. V. according to the "plan" (or as popularly put the "tale") of the G. P. U., Professor Picheta was to play the part of a "connecting link" between the S. B. V. and the "Union for the Liberation of Russia", also created for the occasion by the G. P. U. in Russia, which was to be headed by the well-known academician Platonov, a historian like Picheta. After the failure of the "activities" of the S. B. V., Professor Picheta, like the others, was sent into exile and served it in the city of Vyatka where he distributed tickets in the city dining rooms. Due to the stubborn petitions

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

661 of his wife who had stayed in Moscow, he was liberated in 1934 by the personal intercession of Stalin in the Central Executive Committee of the U. S. S. R. and went back to Moscow. He became a corresponding member of the All-Union Academy of Sciences, and when the political situation demanded that the Kremlin organize a Slavonic Committee, Professor Picheta was used to work on it. He died about three years ago, and in the Soviet press his death was noted as that of an outstanding scholar and, of course, a patriot. /7/

823 To further scientific work and unite the efforts of scientific and cultural workers, the Institute of Belorussian Culture (Inbelkul't) was set up in Minsk with Professor Ignatovskii as its head.[1] Relatively quickly, this Institute laid the foundations for the organization of a Belorussian Academy of Sciences. Then it was filled with graduate students from the first graduating classes of the University. Professor Ignatovskii left Narkompros and became the president of the Academy of Sciences.

874 In addition to the University of Belorussia the former Agricultural Institute was still functioning. At first it was located in Minsk but then changed its name to the Agricultural Academy and moved to the city of Gori-Gorkiy in the Orshanskiy Okrug. There it had plots of land for practical work and the appropriate laboratories. The agricultural high school had been there before the revolution, and the Higher Agricultural Institute before the Polish uprising of 1863. In addition there was a Veterinary Institute in Vitebsk. The Agricultural Academy and the Veterinary Institute were under the control and direction of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R.

871 The Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. developed and put into effect a national educational system which was adapted to Belorussian conditions and differed somewhat from that of the R. S. F. S. R.[1] In the latter, the training comprised essentially a ten-year course of general education, while according to the system of the Narkompros of Belorussia the basis was a seven-year course of general education divided into two parts, comprising four and three years respectively. The academic year of 1925-1926 was the first year when the plan of general compulsory education on the basis of the first part of the seven-year course went into effect. (1) In the towns education was

1. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskai Entsiklopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1927 edition, Vol. V, p. 409.

[1] [Organized about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

871 on the basis of a full seven-year school. The system also planned to have technical schools opened with three-or four-year courses of study for the preparation of semi-qualified specialists. Professional and technical schools were based upon this seven-year system of general education and were the final link in the system of secondary education. The next level comprised institutions of higher education -- the universities and higher technical institutes. /8/ The night schools for adults were also adapted to the system of national education.

Periodicals and Cultural Activities

517 The many-sided cultural activity was a powerful stimulus for attracting the masses, particularly the youth. Youth was fired with the idea of a rebirth of the national culture.[*] The number of poets, writers, critics, scientific workers in history and geography, in the search for natural resources and in the studying of various kinds of problems grew tremendously in Belorussia. The Belorussian Academy of Sciences, the University, and the Agricultural Academy followed watchfully, occasionally challenging but always supporting the bold initiative of young innovators in literature, art, and research. The Belorussian State Publishing House did not refuse to publish the work of young poets and scholars, counting on their further development. The attentive attitude of national figures toward the young cadres inspired their efforts and distracted them from the often rather difficult living conditions.

204 The newspapers Zvezda /The Star/ and Sovetskaia Belorussia /Soviet Belorussia/ were printed in Minsk,[*] the first was considered a Party organ and the second an organ of the Soviet power. Local papers were also printed in the surrounding towns, and eventually each rayon had its own newspaper. Zvezda /The Star/ was considered the most influential although in reality its influence was determined largely by a certain fear of becoming an object of treatment on its pages. As it was a Party organ, Zvezda /The Star/ made pretensions to the infallibility and unimpeachibility of everything printed in it. It copied the general line of the Moscow Pravda and made every effort to imitate it. Newspapers were also printed in the Hebrew and in Polish. The popular literary-social magazine Polymia /The Flame/ Molodniak, /Youth/ Uzvysha /Upwards/. Polymia had an influence upon the formulation of a national

[*] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 11c - Analyst]

204 consciousness as had Uzvysha upon the development of literature and art. Others were also published, and Molodniak was directed especially at youth. There were also departmental magazines, the organ of the Narkompros of the B. S. S. R., As'veta /Education/ was well known.

545 A special topic should be devoted to the development of the theatrical art.* In any mention of the successful development of the Belorussian national theatres, the very old First Belorussian Theater in Minsk deserves attention. Up until 1930, it was original in its creative work. With very infrequent exceptions it gave translated plays. It promoted a series of talented artists. /9/ The second Belorussian Theater was organized out of studios. A special role must be assigned to the Belorussian Traveling Theater which was organized and directed by the enthusiast Vladislav Golubok. Golubok was a man of many talents. He wrote several plays based on Belorussian national life which ran for long periods, and were removed from the repertoire of the Traveling Theater when the general destruction of everything national in Belorussia began. The services of V. Golubok and his theater to the Belorussian nation are exceptionally great. During its existence it made tours not only of the cities but even of the most inaccessible villages and hamlets under conditions which, materially and otherwise, were most difficult. The productions of the Traveling Theater were in accordance with the tastes of the national masses, always being accompanied by folksongs, music, and fold dancing. V. L. Golubok was deservedly the first person in Belorussia to acquire the title of national artist. In 1937 he was arrested by the N. K. V. D.

The Minsk Jewish Theater under the talented direction of Rafal'skii also enjoyed well-earned fame in Belorussia. It presented a series of plays on national themes. Among the Jews the play "Girsh Lekert" was particularly popular as it portrayed the hero, Girsh Lekert, of the revolutionary struggle in 1902 against the Tsarist government in Wilno.

814 The efforts of Belorussian and Jewish composers and collectors of folksongs, music, and folk dancing deserved particular attention. Their work at this time[1] was very opportune and is of colossal value. This aspect of the national folk culture had been neither investigated nor written down before the revolution . . . In ten or fifteen years, collectivization would have absorbed the beautiful national art of the Soviet, artifically created, 'chastushka, ' composed by obliging

*[Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category IIC—Analyst]

814 [661] literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovshchina) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and others have been preserved. [545] Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

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423 the land was hereditary property, which had the positive results of continual and steady use of the land and the negative one of constant subdivision of the peasant holdings in the country. The Bolshevik uprising did not bring about any significant improvements in the life of the small holders as sovkhozes and kolkhozes were organized on the large estates. Up until 1930, D. Prishchepov, a former Socialist-Revolutionary, was the head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture. He had managed to live abroad and become acquainted with agricultural conditions in Denmark and Germany. Upon his return to Belorussia he contemplated a series of measures which he considered the more useful since they were in accordance with the desires of the great mass of the Belorussian peasantry. So as to increase the land fund and distribute it among those who had little or none, Prishchepov managed to abolish a part, although an insignificant one, of the Soviet farms and also to bring about significant reductions in the land belonging to these establishments. As the basic unit of land to be used, Prishchepov chose the small village of ten to twenty peasant farms, with comfortable farmsteads of up to one hectare in size. /11/
[3/1] Even in those times it cost him[1] a great effort to prove the advantage of the small village over the large one as a method of land exploitation. The necessity of rapid reconstruction of the system of land tenure in Belorussia was obvious. In the first place there was the question of what to do with the reserve land which had been given for temporary use to the landless peasants and those with small holdings. Then, it was proposed to apportion crowded and disorganized large villages among small ones. Part of the peasantry wanted small separate farms under the new system, but Prishchepov could not officially establish separate farmsteads. In practice it happened as an exception that, when lands were being distributed in the woods, separate farms were
668 cut out as well as small villages. . . To placate the theoreticians, Prishchepov[1] had to assure them that it was very easy to make the transformation from a small village to an agricultural commune. Prishchepov knew quite well how absurd these assurances were, but being one of the leaders of the national movement he was guided by the interests of the country and not by the presuppositions of the
654 Communists which at the time were both unclear and confused. In addition to increasing agricultural assistance Prishchepov[1] introduced a series of measures designed to encourage improvements on the holdings of independent peasants. Various types of agricultural exibition

[1] [D. Prishchepov, head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture, beginning about 1920 to 1930 - Analyst]

654 were widely promoted by Narkomzem where diplomas and testimonials were presented and prizes of goods and cash awarded. All these measures of D. Prishchepov were subsequently brought against him as accusations, to show that he was against the socialist forms of agriculture and that his work was not only harmful but outright sabotage.

423 The "gathering together" of the Belorussian lands and their unification with the B. S. S. R. was completed only in the beginning of
1927 . . . The question of consolidating within the B. S. S. R. regions
which were tied to it economically as well as having a homogeneous
population had been raised several times before the Kremlin . . . The
problem was not solved until 1924 partly by the annexation of a
000 section of the Vitebsk and Mogilev provinces. On the occasion of the
annexation of these regions an extraordinary session of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R. was convoked, with workers and peasants also participating. The President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., M. Kalinin, was present at the session, together with two well-known Comintern figures -- the Poles Felix Kohn and Tomasz Dombalj. During his own speech Dombalj turned to the loge of the Polish counsul and cried out in a burst of revolutionary enthusiasm, "Remember that only we have the right to speak in the name of Poles and peasants!" Dombalj was a deputy to the Polish Sejm and for belonging to the Communist Party had been tried and exchanged for someone in the Soviet Union. The future Soviet Marshall, Tukhachevskii, was also present at the session, and his restrained and correct deportment contrasted with that of the Caucasian, Gai, the commander of the Cavalry Corps, /12/ who paced up and down nervously during his speech and shouted, "We will water our horses in the Vistula yet!" The session was officially designated as a triumphant celebration of the correctness of Soviet policy toward the nationalities. M. Kalinin, by attending, emphasized the "voluntary accession" of the territory of the B. S. S. R.; the Polish Communists who were present demonstrated their solidarity with the Soviets in questions of policy toward minorities, in opposition to the policy of Poland which had taken over western Belorussia while General Zhilunovich forcibly occupied Wilno. The speeches of Tukhachevskii, the deputy director of the Red Army General Staff, and Gai, who had taken part in the raid, on Warsaw, even though it was unsuccessful, bore witness to the unsatisfied pretensions to Poland which were backed up with armed might.

668 631 728 Only toward the end of 1926, after the most persistent petitioning in the Kremlin, and at that time petitioning had not yet become perilous, the question of uniting the Gomel'Guberniya to the B. S. S. R. was raised. However M. Kalinin himself, the President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., came out sharply against unification. The Kremlin was forced to resort to a peculiar sort of plebiscite in order to refute the pretensions of the Belorussians. It organized a special commission with the Latvian, Peters, as president, which was to determine on the spot what language was spoken by the inhabitants of Gomel' Guberniya. It was decided that the population had forgotten its language and finally become Russified. No research was undertaken to determine where the population belonged ethnologically. The commission traveled around the sizable territory of the Gomel' Guberniya using the following method for its investigations: upon arriving in some inhabited place and meeting the peasantry, the members would enter upon some sort of unofficial conversation. This was taken down in shorthand, and an analysis of the notes refuted the calculations of those who had opposed the inclusion of Gomel' Guberniya in the B. S. S. R. The real reasons for the opposition to having the Guberniya transferred were of an economic nature. Gomel' Guberniya is very rich in various raw materials, especially high quality forests which are so situated that transportation of the wood is very convenient. It is criss-crossed in many directions by railroad lines and convenient water routes. A well equipped match industry is centered there, one which at that time was the most active in the U. S. S. R., and there is a paper industry in Dobrush. Obviously it was not intended that the economy of the B. S. S. R. be strengthened at the expense of that of the R. S. F. S. R. This is confirmed by the fact that such industrial centers as Zlynka, Novozybkov, Klintsy, and Starodub, all within twenty or thirty kilometers of Gomel', were not given to the B. S. S. R., simply because some match factories and other manufacturing are located there. The fact of the unification itself passed unnoticed by the masses. Gomel' Guberniya was included in the B. S. S. R. without the customary fanfare and pomp. /13/ The Belorussian nationalist circles were faced with new problems. It was indispensible to take all measures to include the new territory with its Belorussian population within the general scope of operations as quickly as possible, and, moreover, this transitional process had to be accomplished very carefully and painlessly. It all

668 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official
191 languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized
by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all
widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions
of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national
schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity
with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes
became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal
teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a
Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach,
who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and
activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists
and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers
use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal,
which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was
accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his
job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension
after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows
just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom
to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be
punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the
minorities.

563 Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in
[692] Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population.
In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact
groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for
the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

7: Krushinsky--16 G-4,5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[762] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native
563 Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five
[798] percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish
563 language and were Belorussian by nationality. In the heyday of the
661 nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The
563 Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively
563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the
563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main
647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very
[434] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no
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557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

557 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers
665 were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was
not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the
fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often
had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers,
and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant
668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made
use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out
their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state
apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for
their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful
vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the
peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority,
occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable
impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy
President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary
qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal
life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the
vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and
factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal
565 influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia,
living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had
no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without
renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The
Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf. p. 19, Cat. 116--Analyst]

661 kept in operation through private donations. Belorussian students 553 could not enter the higher schools. The national social organization "Belorusskaia Gramada," which had 120,000 members, was closed and its leaders tried and imprisoned. The Orthodox clergy had to use Polish to preach in the churches and to teach the Law of God in the schools. The population of western Belorussia knew that in the B.S.S.R. a state was being built, that /17/ the official language was Belorussian, that a Belorussian Academy of Sciences, a State University, and other institutions of higher learning were in existence and that admission to them did not present any particular difficulties--on the contrary there were the so-called workers' high schools which prepared those who lacked secondary education for admission into the universities. National theaters were in operation, and literature 661 and poetry flourished. The Soviet press, which penetrated into western 166 Belorussia, as well as the radio and underground Communist organizations intensified their propaganda about the work in the B.S.S.R.. The Soviet Consulate in Warsaw, by using the Deputy Consul Ul'ianov who was himself from a Minsk family, generously supplied dollars to finance anti-Polish propaganda, the pro-Communist press, and various organizations in western Belorussia. As a result of this, hundreds of young people streamed across the border *into the B.S.S.R., illegally* and at great risk and danger to themselves, in the hopes of getting into the bright lecture halls of the University of Belorussia. The intelligentsia also crossed the border to find work and to find some scope for their abilities. How much bitter disillusionment there was after 1930, how much inconsolable grief and sorrow for their unfulfilled hopes and broken young lives. Led by their enthusiasm, they trustingly dashed into the perfidious and deceiving Soviet flame. Who could have supposed then that this great constructive work would be pitilessly crushed and that thousands of Belorussians would perish in the cellars of the N.K.V.D. or in concentration camps.

First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Community Party of Belorussia

665 Up to 1930 there were several first secretaries of the Communist Party of Belorussia. All of them were envoys of the Kremlin, in fact plenipotentiaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union--guardians, preservers and exponents of the general line of the

665 Politburo. Thus it was already determined that the first secretaries of the Communist Party were always sent to Belorussia and were never Belorussians. Each of these envoys had a greater or lesser effect upon the course of the national work. There were no Belorussian Communists with pre-revolutionary records as most of them had not entered the Party before 1920.

The First Secretary of the Party from 1921 to 1924 was the Pole, Waclaw Bogutskii (1). In those times large scale national work

1. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1927, Vol. VI, p. 623.

had not progressed further than a gathering of forces and appraisal of the situation. Bogutskii had no special influence of the lives of the Belorussian people. His activity consisted mainly of speeches at meetings and assemblies, and as an orator of that type he was not bad. After a short period Bogutskii /18/ was replaced by Asatkin (Vladimirskii) (1) who was Russian by nationality. He did not prove

1. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet *Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. IV, p. 364.*

anything special. Under him the Vitebsk and Mogilevsk Guberniyas were joined to the B. S. S. R. , and after a short while Asatkin was recalled to Moscow. After him came Krinitskii, also Russian. He carried on his Party work for almost three years (1924-1927) (2).

2. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia/ Small Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. IV, p. 364.

By nature Krinitskii was a careerist--showing little independence in his work and always orienting himself by the Kremlin. At that time Belorussian influence predominated in the Party, and Krinitskii was alone. To further their own interests the Belorussians made use of the Kremlin's slogan concerning the building of a national culture that was "national in form and socialist in content." Krinitskii could not obstruct the national work--what was important to him was somehow to keep an eye on it to make sure that the culture preserved a socialist content. Krinitskii had no authority

665 among the Party rank-and-file. He was recalled to Moscow to the agitation and propaganda section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. After his removal to Moscow he quickly forgot about the work in Belorussia. While director of the agitation and propaganda section in the Kremlin, Krinitskii at one conference sharply rebuked the president of Belorussia who was making a speech in Belorussian since he had not fully mastered Russian. Krinitskii reproved him, recommending that he speak in Russian.

After Krinitskii, in 1928, the First Secretary was the Latvian, Knorin. His activity left a definite mark, the more so since the Kremlin twice sent him to Belorussia as secretary. Knorin got acquainted with the leaders of the national movement and understood the strivings of the Belorussians for national rebirth, aided in the national work, and supported the initiative of the Belorussians. After he left, in 1928, Jan Gamamik (1) an Austrian by nationality /19/ became First Secretary. Correct and tactful, a good orator and organizer, he did not introduce any changes in the national work. Gamarnik did not become intimate with anyone, especially in Belorussia. His activity did not last long--first appointed Director of the Political Administration of the Belorussian Military District he was then transferred to the post of Director of the Political Administration of the Red Army. In about 1928 or 1929 the Kremlin sent the Estonian, Gei, as secretary to Belorussia.

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186 In a comparatively short period the national work in Belorussia had carved a broad path for itself. The rebirth of a national culture was an indisputable fact; cadres of youth had been trained and posted all throughout the state apparatus. The region was healing itself of the wounds inflicted by wars and occupations; it appeared that the Communism of the war years had gone, never to return. There was some thought of conquering new positions since the national work and all its measures had found unquestioning support among the broad masses of the Belorussian people... The Party leadership,

1. The Large Soviet Encyclopedia states that in his youth Gamarnik lived in Kiev. In Minsk he was considered a Czech. As we know, Gamarnik was subsequently shot together with Tukhachevskii. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. XIV, p. 456.

665 sent by the Politburo in the persons of the first secretaries, in the 186 majority of cases adopted a strictly formal attitude toward the national work. It is possible that only Knorin really understood the situation. Secretary Krinitskii learned Belorussian and occasionally made speeches in it, but even so it was only to produce a good impression on the Kremlin and in order to assist his Party career in this way, that he did it.

The First Victims

Up to 1930, there had only been one trial aimed directly at a 666 nationalist. In 1926, Iu. Listopad, a non-Party teacher of Belorussian in the high schools, was arrested in Slutsk. He was tried in Minsk for organizing some sort of plot against the Soviet Authority. The trial was open to the public, and there were lawyers for both the presecution and defense. The students gave Listopad stormy ovations, and flowers were even brought to him during the trial. However the whole affair was cleverly and insidiously organized. The judges were members of the Belorussian intelligentsia and the Public Prosecutor, a well-known nationalist writer, D. Zhilunovich. /20/ It was all so well arranged that even Listopad's warmest supporters were forced to judge and condemn him. He was sentenced to five years in a reformatory--as the prisons were still called at that time. The shadows continued to thicken even after Listopad's trial had been forgotten. The twilight of the NEP was coming, and by the end of 1928 the cities were beginning to feel the shortage of agricultural products. In the Ukraine and other grain producing areas the Soviet regime was beginning to organize the first Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), the forerunners of the collectivizations which was soon to sweep over the peasantry.

In the beginning of 1931, Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii, an academician and the leader of the Belorussian nationalists, fell a victim of the B. P. U. He had been called in for interrogation and afterwards shot himself in his own apartment. (1)

1. The suicide of Professor Ignatovskii was the last, as well as the most decisive act in the particular "case" of the S. V. B.* with which the G. P. U. had intended to connect him. The "case" was closed, and all those implicated were sent into exile in administrative functions--only the Communists Balitskii, Prishchepov, Al. Adamovich, and Il'iuchenos /sic/ were sent to concentration camps.

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* Belorussian abbreviation, Cf. p. 6 meaning:Union for the liberation of Belorussia.

661 Professor Ignatovskii was widely known and very popular for his
prominent activities. In those days the G. P. U. did not yet dare to
throw him in a cellar and make short work of him. As a result of
his suicide there were persistent rumors that the G. P. U. had succeeded
in getting Professor Ignatoviskii to name those members of the national
movement who had taken upon themselves to check the Soviet regime
in Belorussia and establish a democratic system. The professor preferred death, but even before his suicide the movement had been
dealt a telling blow by the arrest of the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R., Dimitrii Prishchepov. Himself a son of
the people and a former teacher he was well able to understand the
age long striving of the Belorussian peasant for a private farm of his
own. He knew the reasons for the backwardness, poverty, and need
241 of the countryside. Before collectivization, his[1] activities had been
423 directed toward strengthening the private working peasant's position
661 by building them homesteads which were generally grouped in small
hamlets but frequently isolated. This arrangement gave the peasant
wide scope for his own initiative, and he could also draw on state
agricultural assistance. /21/ This tendency in the work of the
People's Commissariat of Agriculture turned out to be in complete
contradiction to the Kremlin's avowed policy of collectivizing agriculture, and besides, an unheard of tempo of collectivization was
demanded, with the country's total efforts directed at the destruction
of the private peasants' farmstead to be replaced by the other, so-called socialist, form of agriculture. The most prosperous farms
were ruined completely and their proprietors assigned to the outlawed category of kulaks -- then they were carted away under
inhuman conditions and sent out to the most godforsaken and uninhabited regions of Siberia. The peasants who still remained unsubdued were tagged as podkulachnik' and subjected to public
persecution and economic pressure in the form of a high head tax --
in spite of the fact that these peasants were the ones who had most
of the diplomas and certificates which the Soviet government had
given out for high showings in animal husbandry, gardening, truck
661 farming, etc. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture had to play
first violin in this destruction -- in other words it had to destroy

[1] [D. Prishchepov, Peoples Commissar of Agriculture to 1930 - Analyst]

661 pitilessly everything that had been created as a labor of love during the NEP. New people were needed, and Prishchepov was classed as an enemy of the people, a wrecker, middleman, protector of the kulaks, and a promulgator of the private homesteads and small villages which were so harmful to the socialist forms of agriculture. In official documents and propaganda his work was contemptuously called the "prishchepovshchina." However, the besmirched activities of Prishchepov the People's Commissar of Agriculture, left a happy and lasting memory among the Belorussian peasantry.

The death of the academician, Professor Ignatovskii, and the arrest of D. Prishchepov were not isolated instances. Almost simultaneously a large group of culturally and economically prominent figures were arrested, among them the very popular philologist and academician Ia. Lesik, the renowned Belorussian geographer and economist, Academician Smolich, the Secretary of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, Academician V. Lastovskii, Picheta, who was rector of the University, and others.

665 There were changes in the attitude and approach of the G.P.U.
625 This organization received a standing order which was not to be changed for the arrest of Party members. As late as 1930, the G.P.U. had quite openly not meddled in the internal affairs of the Communist Party as the Party itself held court over its unsubmissive members and administered punishment. It had its own controlling and punitive organs in the Central Control Commission which had its plenipotentiaries throughout the republics and oblasts.... /22/

Anton Balitskii and the "Odessa" Group (1)

661 The People's Commissar of Public Education of the B.S.S.R., Anton Balitskii, was also a victim of the G.P.U. Until 1928 he was a deputy in the Narkomat, but even then he actually directed all its activities. Professor V. Ignatovskii had many other responsibilities besides the Narkomat of Public Education. He devoted a lot of attention to the Institute of Belorussian Culture and gave lectures at the University and in the Agricultural Institute; literary and scientific work also took up a lot of his time. He had written several studies of

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1. For information on the "Odessites" see the article by A. Sakovich, "Belorussi v Odesse" /"Belorussians in Odessa" Beda, /Misery/ No. 5 (10), May, 1952.

Belorussian history and his Korotkii Ocherk po IstoriiBelorussii /Short Essay on Belorussian History/ remained a basic text in the high schools until his death.

In the first part of 1950 A. Balitskii was fired from his job in the Narkompros /People's Commissariat of Public Education/ but even after this was not arrested. Evidently the G. P. U. had not yet worked out a plan for the "major" arrests. It had to have some evidence to try him for implication in a plot. In effecting this the G. P. U. considered it fundamental to enlarge and fill in the accusatory evidence with the testimony of various individuals who would later be arrested. At the time the arrest of these distinguished members of the Republic was still a sensation, and no one was yet accustomed to mass arrests. The Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, after firing Balitskii from the Narkompros, passed a resolution to demote him to so-called lower level work as an agitator and propagandist in the railroad shops of Gomel'. This decision was obviously the consequence of pressure brought by Belorussian members of the Bureau, who contemplated removing him from the limelight for a while so that people in Minsk would forget about him. The official motivation for such a decision was to give A. Balitskii, after his many blunders, a chance to reforge himself in the workingman milieu of a large factory such as the shop in Gomel', where more than two thousand laborers were working and which was considered to be functioning under Belorussian conditions. It should be pointed out that A. Balitskii possessed great organizational abilities, the capacity for work, and the knack of picking out the necessary capable assistants. Under his guidance there had been worked out and put into practice rather successfully a general plan of initiating universal compulsory courses in the Belorussian educational system./23/ The old teacher, Dm. Stsetsuro also put a lot of effort and his enormous practical experience into this project. Balitskii belonged to the so-called group of Belorussian "Odessites". While an officer in the First World War he, together with other members of the army on the Rumanian Front, had organized the Belorussians in the front lines after the February Revolution. This group of organizers than became located in Odessa and kept up connections with the nationalist workers in Minsk. After the front collapsed the Germans occupied a sizable share of Belorussian territory, and the Bolsheviks set themselves the task of "liberating" Belorussia with Red Army detachments. At the time a very prominent Belorussian named Stepan Nekrashevich was in Odessa with Balitskii.

66/Afterwards he put a lot of work into organizing the Institute of Belorussian Culture and later was President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In Odessa on January 13, 1919, Nekrashevich was careless enough to greet the French general, Bartel, in the name of the Belorussians. This became known in Minsk and when the National-Democrats were being dispersed, S. Ia. Vol'fson in his work against them, Ideologiia i Metodologiia Natsdemovshchiny, /The Ideology and Methodology of the National-Democrats/ wrote, "S. Nekrashevich welcomed General Bartel in Odessa, 'On behalf of the National Center of Belorussia, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the South of Russia, who bring us not only the hope but, I would say, the guarantee of a speedy liberation from the oppressions of the Bolsheviks who for more than fifteen months have been devastating our country' . . . Nekrashevich begged General Bartel for armed assistance." (pages 69-70)

Belorussia became Soviet; Belorussians and Odessites, returned to Minsk, and the majority of them held responsible positions. The welcome Nekrashevich had extended to General Bartel was not forgotten, however, but was unearthed from the archives and figured on every occasion as a shining example of the political untrustworthiness not only of himself but of the whole group of "Odessites." The calculations of the Belorussians were not justified. His appointment to Gomel' did not save him from the G.P.U. He was arrested before he even started work there, condemned, and sentenced to work out his term of punishment on Medvezh'ja Gora near the construction of the White Sea Canal. Evidently Balitskii died there since we have no more information about him. His wife's death was also tragic. Being a doctor of medicine she was not arrested but later went insane.

Zhilunovich and the "Nats-Dems" /24/

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The Belorussian State Publishing House played a prominent role in the national work. It was the only institution of this kind in Belorussia and issued all printed matter with the exception, of course, of newspapers and periodicals. This publishing house also regulated the priority of everything else published. It was headed by the outstanding Belorussian writer and politician of the older generation, Dimitrii
668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartny).

668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartnyi). Evidently it
was a lot harder to square accounts with him, since he was the organizer
of the B. S. S. R. and the first president of its government; Stalin knew
him personally as he was Commissar of Nationalities when Soviet
Belorussia was being organized. However, Zhilunovich was removed
from the directorship of the press even though he was left in the Party.
668 The fate of the creator[1] of the B. S. S. R. is tragic and instructive.
661 Coming from a workingman's family in the revolutionary town of
Kopyl', Minsk Guberniya, his life was difficult and eventful. Unlike
other remote towns, Zhilunovich's birthplace distinguished itself by
the organized revolutionary activity of its population. This is witnessed by the fact that in 1905 the government had to detail a whole company to this locality to preserve order. In those days it was possible to meet representatives of all the revolutionary parties here -- Socialist-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats, Narodniks, and a rather large number of Bundists. Zhilunovich spent his childhood and early years in this revolutionary environment, working as a tanner; later he went to big cities like Riga and St. Petersburg. In 1917 he was immersed in revolutionary activity up to his ears, he even laid aside his writing. During the NEP, while the Soviet power was becoming stabilized in Belorussia, simultaneously, significant successes were being attained in the national work. Zhilunovich, and other nationalists with him, drew some erroneous conclusions and committed a series of political mistakes. A convinced democrat and nationalist, he put a high value on the culture and way of life of the West. He admired the order and organization of German life, where he had spent more than a year while directing the printing of textbooks for Belorussian schools. He sincerely believed that the B. S. S. R. was going to be a national, democratic republic. Many of the Belorussian politicians of the time shared this mistaken view and Moscow made use of it. Zhilunovich was entrusted with the mission of "persuading" Belorussian emigrants, and especially former members of the government of the Belorussian National Republic, to give up their mandates from the /25/ Belorussian Congress and return to Minsk where they would be given responsible posts. Not yet experienced in the Kremlin's methods a number of eminent Belorussian politicians listened to these persuasions and returned to their homeland. They were all subsequently liquidated by the G. P. U.

In 1926, Zhilunovich was one of the initiators and organizers of the Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography

[1] [Dimitri Zhilunovich - Analyst]

668 and alphabet. Many Belorussian emigrants came from abroad to be
661 present at it . The brigade of the Marxist-Leninist department of the philological section of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, in exposures of National-Democracy, writes about the Conference as follows, "The Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography and alphabet was in fact an open demonstration by National-Democratic counter-revolutionary forces - those in the B. S. S. R. as well as those who were abroad at the time and came to the Conference from their emigration -- Lastovskii, Ezovitov, Zhilka, Golovinskii, and others" (pages 110-111). In the hall where the Academic Conference was held there were no portraits of the leader, no Soviet flag, and naturally no propagandistic slogans of any kind. All this was possible, of course, in 1926, when they were trying to show the Belorussian emigrants that cultural activity in the B. S. S. R. has no connections with political affairs. Zhilunovich paid dearly for all this, from 1930 until his very death. Everything was brought up against him, and in 1933 he was expelled from the Party during the purge. At the end of 1936 or the beginning of 1937, he was arrested. He went out of his mind from the tortures and torment of cross-examination and was sent to Mogilev to the prisoners' division of a hospital for the mentally ill. There he either died or was poisoned. In the same year, one of his admirers, peculiarly enough a chief of the regional militia, secretly tried to find out where this martyr was buried. But the G. P. U. is good at hiding its tracks and the search met with no success whatsover.

Mass Arrests in Minsk --1930-1931

661 Mass arrests took place in Minsk in the middle of 1930. The provinces escaped almost unscathed, but prominent Belorussian cultural figures were arrested from the Academy of Sciences, the University, the Narkompros, and some in the Narkomzem /People's Commissariat of Agriculture/. Among those arrested was People's Commissar of Agriculture Prishchepov's deputy, Aleksandr (Ales') Adamovich -- and "Odessite" like Balitskii and Nekrashevich. While still a youth he had participated ardently in the work of the Bobrujsk Uyezd, Minsk Guberniya. /26/ After several years his ardor cooled, and in about 1925 he became a zealous nationalist. To his confederates, Adamovich whole-heartedly and sincerely confessed and repented that during the first years of his Soviet work,

because of inexperience, he had not been sufficiently sensitive to the needs of the disinherited Soviet peasantry. Quite soon he grew wise to the intent, course, and tactics of the Communist Party. Even when in prison in Minsk he was absolutely undismayed by his arrest and according to the accounts of eyewitnesses would have been rather chagrined if by some miracle he had been released. They sent him to work out his sentence in the Solovetskiy Concentration Camp. One of the surviving inmates of that camp, the Ukrainian Pidhainyl, writes in his memoirs under the title, Nedostreliannye /The Unexecuted : literally means 'The Not Completely Executed' -- Translator,/ on page 115, about Adamovich, "To tell the truth I did not come across Adamovich at Solovkiy but he was in solitary confinement in Moreplav where he had been accused of some sort of deadly Fascist sins, and it seems that there he got ten years more." There are no further traces of Adamovich. Even though young and strong it appears that he perished during the severe solitary confinement.

Among cultural workers, the majority of those driven out of Belorussia in 1930 and 1931 had formulated their political convictions already before the revolution. Many of them were authors of learned works. Mitrofan Dovnar-Zapol'skii, a professor of history had his first treatise published in 1891 in Kiev, Ocherki Istorii Krivichskoi i Dregovichskoi Zemel do kontsa XII stoletiia /Essays on the History of the Krivichi and the Dregovichi to the End of the Twelfth Century/; Litovskaia metrika /Lithuanian Metrics/, was published in St. Petersburg in 1903; Issledovaniia i stat'i /Research and Articles/, Vol. I, Etnografiia i sotsiologiia /Ethnography and Sociology/, Obychnoe pravo /Common Law/, Statistika /Statistics/, Belorusskaia pis'mennost' /Belorussian Literature/, in Kiev in 1900 Osnovy Belorusskoi gosudarstvennosti / The Foundations of the Belorussian State/ in Wilno in 1919 (in Belorussian). This short list of a part of Professor Dovnar-Zapol'skii's many works indicates the direction taken by his scholarly activities after 1891. By 1926 he had already been deported from Belorussia, and by 1930-1931 even his name had been completely eliminated from Belorussian writing ...(1)

1. For information about Professor Dovnar-Zapol'skii note the article by one of his students, A. Sakovich, in Beda /Misery/ No.7(12), July, 1952, pages 193-206.

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Ш Professor Picheta, the (relatively, of course) elderly rector of the University of Belorussia, has very many historical works to his credit. While Rector of the University /27/ he wrote Istoria Belorussii /A History of Belorussia/, Part I, Minsk, 1924, and Voprosy vysshei shkoly v Belorussii v proshlom /Problems of Higher Education in Belorussia in the Past/, both in Belorussian. Professor Picheta was arrested in 1930. When he was released from exile, by a lucky chance, he further published Osnovnye momenty istoricheskogo razvitiia Zapadnoi Ukrainy i Zapadnoi Belorussii /Significant Moments in the Historical Development of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia/, Moscow, 1940, a book which, as one can boldly assert even without reading it, was written on order, expressly for the purpose of providing a theoretical basis for the Red Army's seizure of the western Ukraine and Belorussia. Nikolai Azbukin, a professor of geography at the University of Belorussia, was arrested and exiled to Nolinsk, (formerly) Vyatskaiya Guverniya, in 1930-1931. There is no further information about him . . . The academician, and philologist, Iazep Lesik, was arrested and banished in 1930-1931, and in 1936, while in prison during the Ezhovshchina, was tortured to death. Lesik in particular had to face all kinds of accusations after his arrest. The well-known brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising the "scholars" L. Bobrovich, Shpilevskii, V. Bondarenko, S. Vol'fson, and Ia. Mats'iukevich, wrote, "After the Red Army had driven the Polish Whites and the other White bandits from the B. N. R. /Belorussian National Republic/, from the territory of what is now Belorussia, a part of the former ministers, including Ia. Lesik, remained in Minsk. With the aid of Balinskii /sic! Is that Balitskii?/ and Nekrashevich, those two toadies of the French general, Bartel', who had come to Minsk from Odessa, they began their activities. When, as a result of the victory of the working class under the guidance of the Communist Party, there arose the idea of organizing a research center in the B. S. S. R. (The Institute of Belorussian Culture), the Nats-Dems at once went to considerable trouble to take over that center and use if for anti-proletarian purposes. They began to group themselves around the People's Commissariat of Public Education so as to get down to 'business' immediately. Having joined forces under Ignatovskii's wing in Narkompros, on January 27, 1921, they heard an appropriate speech by Nekrashevich, the same Nekrashevich who, as late as January 13, 1919, wrote a letter to the French general, Bartel', asking his aid in the liberation of the Belorussian 'motherland' from the barbarian Bolsheviks."

LL1 (page 130) In another place the brigade writes, "Unfortunately the efforts of the Nats-Dems met with a significant amount of success. For example, Lesik and Lastovskii came quite close to liquidating 'tovarishch,' a word which is detested by reactionaries of all varieties. This word which is so saturated with revolutionary emotion was almost thrown out of the Belorussian language by the friendly efforts of the National-Democrats, and in full agreement with the Skarina tradition replaced by the patriarchally polite dziadz'ka (diadia /uncle/) . . . And responsible Soviet workers, frequently even Party men /28/ call each other dziadz'ka and tsetka (diadia and tetia /uncle and aunt/). Lesik in 1918-1920, conscious of his strength, ridiculed the word tovarishch in the White Guard newspapers, always putting it mockingly in quotation marks . . . When the Soviets came to power these people almost succeeded in driving the hated word out of use . . . " (Page 124).

The literary critic, Vladislav Charzhinskii (Derzhinskii), was arrested and exiled to Kazan'. His Vypiski iz Belorusskoi literatury XIX-XX Stoletii, /Selections from Belorussian Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries/ Minsk, 1926, had served as a basic text for teachers of Belorussian literature.

Another group arrested, included the young writers, poets, university lecturers, and school teachers who had already shown promise of great ability and who had been educated to the realities of Soviet life. The overwhelming majority of them were from the lower classes, mostly from the peasantry. It was a gifted generation stoic and staunch. Adam Babareko, a lecturer in philology and a talented literary critic, was arrested the first time in 1930, exiled in 1931, and died in prison in 1937. He was born a peasant. The young and gifted poet, Vladimir Dubovka, was arrested for the first time in 1930 and deported in 1931. In 1934 he was transferred in exile to Chuvashia, and in 1937 he disappeared in the torture chambers of Ezhovshchina. Another talented poet, Aleksandr Dudar, was first exiled in 1929 to the Smolensk Oblast', arrested again in 1937 and tortured to death. Vasilii Shashalevich, a playwright, was first arrested in 1930. In 1936 he was again arrested and sent to Kolyma where he died.

It is apparent from this short list that these people were active workers and essential elements in the national cultural rebirth -- the teachers and mentors of the young cadres of nationalists. They all had solid scholarly backgrounds.

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661 Characteristic of the 1930 and 1931 arrests was that very few of the prisoners were punished by exile. In those times there were not yet enough concentration camps with the result that those deported were allowed to live at liberty in a restricted area. However, this sort of banishment was noted for its gentleness. In order to make supervision more convenient, the G. P. U. usually concentrated them in the sparsely settled northern provinces where it was impossible for them to find work to earn their daily bread. If one considers that the majority of those exiled /29/ were intellectuals, often elderly and unfit for physical labor, and that no one needed their literary skills, then it is apparent that their situation was very difficult. They did not all have relatives who could help them consistently. Times were very hard in the thirties, famine was in the country and the population lived at a very meager level of sustenance --therefore a significant part of those exiled were doomed to a slow death by starvation.

During 1930 and 1931 the uppermost group of workers in the Belorussian national movement was eliminated when the G. P. U. had completed its work, there remained the task of justifying this sharp and unexpected change of policy by means of propaganda. The prisoners had not been granted trials; people just disappeared, to turn up later in Siberia, on the Solovetskiye Islands, on the White Sea Canal construction, or in exile. There were persistent rumors that the prisoners had been accused of organizing and participating in the "Union for the Rebirth of Belorussia" /the S. V. B. / or the "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" /the S. O. B. /. At the time, the G. P. U. press usually printed slanted selections from "testimonies" which had been wrung from the prisoners by force. In the form of a secret brochure, as completely secret material, a pamphlet was passed around for the enlightenment of highly placed Communists. Without indicating how the prisoners' testimonies were procured, Party newspapers, periodicals, and special "exposures" quoted extracts from them. Then the secretary of the Party Central Committee or a member of the Central Committee Bureau was likely to make use of them somewhere at a meeting of the Party 'aktiv'.

"Cleansing" after Arrests -- Elimination of "Nats-Dems"

Official propaganda was faced with the task of portraying the Belorussian national movement as the work of Belorussian nationalists

LU meaning that it was synonomous with counter-revolutionary, wrecking activity and espionage -- aimed at tearing the B. S. S. R. away from the Soviet Union and creating a bourgeois national-democratic republic. Among those arrested were included the leading Belorussian intellectuals-- the brains of the national movement, its theoreticians and those who put theory into practice . . . Social origin was of course taken into account, and every method was utilized to discredit the prisoners. The national movement was contemptuously christened the "Natsdemovshchina," and all who had either partaken in the national work or sympathized with it were called "Nats-Dems." The Soviet press and orators at official and unofficial meetings and gatherings elaborated on these epithets with all possible variations. /30/ It is characteristic that representatives of other nationalities such as the Lithuanian Ambrazhunas, who was a well-known Soviet worker, and the Jewish writer, Plavnik, who was famous under the pseudonym of Zmitrok Biadulia, were implicated in the Belorussian national movement. In its exposures the brigade of the Marxist-Leninist Department of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences wrote, "Nor did Z. Biadulia lag behind; on the pages of Belorusskaia Shliakha, under a pert pseudonym, he wrote, "Our language -- is a sainted martyr which has stood up under various tortures and hostile attacks and, even though it has not emerged victorious, has survived to the present day." (pages 100-101) In another exposure Ideolgiia i metodologiia natsdemokratizma/ The Ideology and Methodology of National Democracy/, the director of the philosophical institute of the Academy of Sciences, the academician S. Ia. Vol'fson, wrote, "The Nats-Dems were guided in all their activities by the 'golden rule' that without God you don't get anywhere. Therefore poets began their books with psalms saying 'My whole being strives toward God -- the living Lord.' (Biadulia) . . . The being of the Nats-Dems unceasingly 'strove toward God'" (pages 39-40). These thoughts of Z. Biadulia date from 1918, and Academician Vol'fson resurrected them in 1930. By the way, Biadulia was saved from arrest; he died in 1941 (1) and his work entered the anthology of Belorussian poetry

1. Z. Biadulia died while leaving Minsk during the German attack in 1941; as a Jew he could not remain, and no one was concerned with Jewish evacuation. He died during those nightmarish days, while escaping through his own efforts.

661 published by the Leningrad Publishing House in 1948. On the orders of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gei, "brigades" were formed in the Academy of Sciences, and they meticulously searched through publications, mimeographed speeches, and addresses for elements of National-Democracy. The prose and poetry, as well as newspaper articles, of writers and poets suspected of "Natsdemovshchina" were subjected to careful scrutiny and inspection. Besides those who were arrested, other, so-called "unexposed" National-Democrats, were smoked out. The attacks were transformed into persecution, and as a result of this badgering the famous Belorussian poet, Ianka Kupala, became desperate and attempted to kill himself after the manner of the Japanese samurais. School texts were leafed through carefully, and most of them withdrawn from circulation -- especially reading chrestomathies, grammars, and collections of dictations. Some were withdrawn automatically upon the arrest of the author and independent of their content, while others were banned as being considered inappropriate to the era of collectivization in agriculture and the Five-Year Plans. In the reading 626 chrestomathies examples of private farmers either in small villages 872 or isolated homesteads were not permitted. /31/ Nor were the arithmetical problems ever taken from the life of an independent farmer. The teachers themselves had to make up problems using the kolkhoz life or cooperative trade as a base. Moreover, only high quality produce or well-fattened stock could appear in the problems. Similarly, with regard to cooperative trade, only examples which affirmed its superiority over private trade could be employed. Some teachers, especially in the provinces, who were not sufficiently experienced in the subtleties of this Soviet policy were not only fired from their jobs but even arrested for using the following sort of example in a dictation. "Three lean kolkhoz cows were grazing in a meadow." All these switches and changes unquestionably had their impact upon the quality of work done in the schools, but educational leaders were held less responsible for the absence of textbooks than for using ones which were "ideologically inconsistent."

Theater repertoires were also subjected to severe inspection.[1] 661 536 626 Everything even remotely reminiscent of Belorussian nationalism disappeared from the stage, the artistic value of the play notwithstanding. The First Belorussian Theater was forbidden to give Na Kupale, /On St. John's Eve/, a marvellous fairy-tale based on the national folk legend of the search for the "flower of luck" on the

[1] [After 1930, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 - Analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka', a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also taken off the stage.

661 They[1] even turned their attentions to the travel ing theater
545 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
626 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations. The travel ing company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles. The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes: white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs. Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket, only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523 A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt
— on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

[1] [official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 11G — Analyst]

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
636 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

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1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

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186 661 was being devoted to the life and work of Doctor Skarina. Portraits of him were printed in large quantities, and they decorated the halls of learned and cultural institutions, schools, museums, etc. There was a large plaster figure of him in the vestibule of the Institute of Belorussian Culture which in 1928 was transferred to the Academy of Sciences. After the proscription of National-Democracy the statue of the learned doctor of the sixteenth century was thrown out. Even the little statues of Skariny were destroyed, and a similar fate attended the portraits and statuettes of the other national hero, the leader of the Belorussian insurgents, K. Kalinovskii.

In order to compromise the National-Democrats and their
208 activities completely the new director of Narkompros[2] of the B. S. S. R. ,I. Gurskii, was ordered to have a play written with the appropriate content. Gurskii decided that he would write it himself and thus make his career. Not gifted with a dramaturgic abilities, he did not write a play but a worthless burlesque on people who had already seen the inside of G. P. U. cellars. Making use of his official position Gurskii compelled the First Theater to accept this talentless work for production. Enormous material resources were used in staging it, to the great detriment of the other theaters . . . However, neither material expenditures nor the director's efforts could help the play in the slightest. Gurskii portrayed the National-Democrats as drunkards and depraved elements. The attempt of the universally respected and talented poet, Ia. Kupala, to take his own life was depicted as the foolhardy escapade of a drunkard. After two or three performances, Gurskii's play, as obviously worthless, forced, and conspurious, was withdrawn without any particular fuss, criticism, contrite admissions, or confessions of error on the part of the author . . . So the atempt to use the stage for persecuting the National-Democrats was for the present not crowned with success. From Soviet newspapers it has been ascertained that I.Gurskii recently "responded" with two plays on post-war kolkhoz life: Khleb /Bread / Svoi Liudi /One's Own People/. They met the same fate as his "response" of twenty-two years ago. /34/ They were panned by the critics and did not even get to the stage.

Simultaneously with the arrest of the National-Democrats
661 all of their writings were withdrawn from libraries, reading rooms, and general circulation, independently of whether or not they had any connection with the charges brought against the prisoners.

[2] [People's Commissariat of Public Education - Analyst]

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661 Everything which had been created during long years of active research in history, ethnography, geography, literature, art, and regional studies; the productions of gifted poets both young and old; and the research work of specialists were all heaped together as harmful National-Democratic rubbish once their authors had been arrested. Every Soviet citizen, especially those who had any connection with a book, could consider himself a candidate for arrest. Every intellectual was particularly diligent to destroy in time any books, newspapers, photographs, or pictures of those who had been arrested in order to avoid extra unpleasantness in the case he might have the bad luck to be arrested himself. Usually arrest was accompanied by a thorough search with confiscation of all photographs, even of people long since dead or of those who had no connection with the arrested person; private correspondence was taken as well as books and documents of authors who had already been imprisoned. All this was later analyzed and sorted out by the G. P. U. in its search for accusatory material. In this fashion valuable books, photographs of friends and relatives possessing great sentimental value, and family correspondence perished and are perishing in flames. People preferred to burn everything suspicious so as not to give the G. P. U. investigators the opportunity to dig around in it with their filthy hands or to ridicule a person's most sacred feelings during cross-examination.

626 661 Here is a short list of those works destroyed which are of general significance: 1) anthologies of Belorussian national art, 2) dialectal dictionaries of the Cherven', Mozyr', and Vitebsk areas, 3) four-hundred year old Belorussian printed matter, 4) the Belorusskii Arkhiv (a periodical). 5) all anthologies of the poet, Ales' Garun (who died in emigration), 6) the publications of the first congress of Belorussian archeologists and archeographers, 7) the publications of the Department of Humanistic Sciences of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences (comprising philology, history, ethnography, archeology, art, law), 8) the series of editions of Belorussian scientific terms, 9) material for the study of Belorussian scientific terminology, 10) Belorussian folk-tales, proverbs, and sayings, written down and arranged by A. Serzhputovskii. This is only an insignificant part of the colossal vandalism.

Out of fear even Soviet books were no longer displayed or advertised in the bookstores . . . All the propaganda posters with Soviet decorations which had been hung in public places disappeared.

626 Some particularly timid institutional directors hastened to repaint
661 their offices so as to cover the Belorussian ornamentation. /35/

It cannot be asserted that this "purge" of everything national in Belorussia, which so often led to absurdities, was carried out as a result of special directives. It was just that the new leaders, particularly those who were above suspicion with regard to the national work, hastened to insure themselves against any unexpected troubles.

There was total havoc in the Belorussian State Museum. Every-
626 thing was radically rearranged, there were changes in the plans of
217 the work, and all the museum's activity was subjected to merciless criticism. The brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising L. Bobrovich, I. Shpilevskii, M. Grinblat, A. Levdanskii, in its "exposure" Etnografiia muzeinoe delo /Ethnography in the Museums/ wrote, "The National-Democrats chose ethnography as one of their basic objectives. Ethnography gives wide scope to the primary aims of the Nats-Dems . . . The ethnographic interest of the National-Democratic scholars was an adjunct to their politics." (page 151). The very purposes of museums were revised -- mass-cultural work among the broad masses of laborers was demanded from them, on socialist construction and class warfare. "First of all it is interesting to note how the Belorussian National-Democrats approach the role of a museum as such. The principle task of a museum is to collect, safeguard, and study objects of archeological, historical, ethnographic, and artistic interest which pertain to Belorussia (Kharlampovich-- Piatigodie Belorusskogo Gosudarstvennogo Muzeia /The Fifth Anniversary of the Belorussian State Museum"/ Nash Krai /Our Country/, No. 1, 1927, page 10). This is an old bourgeois proposition. Is a museum only a collection of interesting things? Is it only a curio cabinet? Is there not even any difference between a Soviet museum and the reactionary ones developed by students of local lore in the good old days?" (page 204), proclaimed the brigade of the Academy of Sciences. Museums were particularly blamed for not carrying on anti-religious activity but on the contrary collecting everything of value from the Catholic and Orthodox churches and the synogogues and preserving it lovingly. As a result of this reproof the museums changed completely. Everything reminiscent of the national essence of Belorussia vanished from the displays.

661 The Belorussian national movement was also charged with aiming to preserve religious feelings among the population and with

661 the desire to create its own Belorussian antonomous church. The national movement was also accused of wanting to preserve ancient church buildings, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish, at a time when their value as historical monuments was being denied. In this connection the remarks of the same investigating brigade of the Academy are characteristic: "One does not have to go far to discover the reasons for the attentive attitude toward the churches of the National-Democrat counter-revolutionaries, if the basic aims and intent of the latter are kept in mind. /36/ Belorussian National-Democrats -- the Nazalezhnik group -- who were dreaming of an independent national republic the whole time, never ceased in their efforts for an independent Belorussian autocephalous church. A bourgeois state cannot exist without a church. It is not accidental that the discussions about an autocephalous church which have been in vogue since the time of Nasha Niva /Our Cornfield/ have not stopped for a minute either among the Belorussian national-fascists on the other side of the border or among the counter-revolutionary National Democrats in the B. S. S. R. (page 226).

661 814 The well-organized movement for study of the region suffered particularly. Everything that had been accomplished through many long years was subjected to annihilating criticism, the movement now had to devote itself to promoting kolkhoz construction in the countryside; every effort at pure scholarship was declared counter-revolutionary and harmful to the country's socialist construction. R. Vydra in his exposure, Belorusskii natsdemokratizm v kraevodcheskom dvizhenii B. S. S. R., /Belorussian National-Democracy in the Regional Study Movement of the U. S. S. R. /, writes this: "Belorussian Nats-Dems, who had almost completely taken over the regional studies movement in Soviet Belorussia, subordinated it to their own bourgeois-restorationist, counter-revolutionary, fascist aims, never hiding their historical connections with their own chauvinist-nationalists forebears of the Belorussian bourgeois camp. For this reason the historical essays on the study of Belorussia or the Belorussian countryside which appeared in Nash Krai /Our Country/ (1) are so very characteristic,

1. Nash Krai /Our Country/ -- the organ of the Central Bureau of Regional Study. The principal articles of the National-Democrats appeared mainly in this magazine.

661 814 even though they conceal the roots of their so opportune study of Belorussia. The articles by Vasilevskii and Kasperovich in Nash Krai, /Our Country/ the historical essay in Kasperovich's book, Kraevedenie, vystupleniia na I i II Vsebelorusskikh s'ezdakh kraevedeniia, /Regional Studies: Speeches Made During the First and Second Congresses of Belorussian Regional Experts/ all this material unanimously and openly, without any sense of shame, established a connection between the ideas and organization of modern National-Democracy in the B. S. S. R. regional studies movement and the Belorussian bourgeois-democratic movement in pre-Revolutionary times" (pages 244 - 245). Kasperovich, Shliubskii, and others, the spiritual leaders of the regional studies movement, were dismissed from their posts and deported in 1931. Regional studies in the B. S. S. R. was headed by a small-minded careerist, Serafimov, and national-chauvinism was discovered not only in the magazine, Nash Krai /Our Country/, but even in its name. So it was renamed Sovetskii Krai /The Soviet Country/ a title which is loose enough to encompass the whole Soviet Union.

New Personalities /37/

661 Who replaced the arrested leaders of the Belorussian national movement? In place of the imprisoned People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, the former president of the Public Education Workers' Union, Anton Platun, was appointed. He had been director of the union for a very short period. Up until these new appointments he had been public prosecutor in Borisov for a while and then secretary of the Communist Party in the Slutsk district. In general he was considered only of average capacity. He had had neither training as a teacher nor even a secondary education, having progressed no further than one of the so-called higher grammar schools. In order to invest him with the authority befitting his appointment as People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R. Platun was given the title of academician. He had no learned works to his credit, and the only lectures he had given were harangues at Party meetings. When the campaign for rooting out the "Natsdemovshchina" began, Platun took a rather active part in the unmasking of the nationalistic inclinations of the poets Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos. While in Narkompros he displayed no particular initiative and did not even

disarrange the system established under Professor Ignatovskii although, of course, the arrests caused considerable alteration in the personnel of Narkompros. Under Platun there was a reform of the Belorussian institutions of higher education. The University and the Agricultural Academy were separated into two institutions. However this was not on Platun's initiative but the result of a directive from Moscow.

In the place of the deported Rector of the University, Professor Picheta, Ia. Korenevskii, a member of the collegium of Narkompros, was appointed. Ideologically he held views similar to those of the arrested Belorussians, and later on he also was fired and arrested.

As People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R. an employee of the agricultural cooperative, a man named Rechitskii, was appointed. Even though he was only semi-educated, he had had a little practical experience in Soviet work and was relatively reasonable and competent as far as peasant farming was concerned. In his practical work the People's Commissar of Agriculture /Narkomzem/ was completely immersed in promulgating the collectivization and fulfilling Party directives in regard to this question. He did not concern himself with exposing the activities of his businesslike predecessor and had no inclinations toward careerism. The working staff of this large commissariat was not totally obliterated, only a few of the leading workers, namely those who had been close assistants of Prishchepov, were arrested (including Smolich, and Godes who was the leading man on land reclamation, and Savich). Rechitskii was considered a climber from work on a lower level rather unfamiliar with the situation, and therefore less was demanded of him at first. /38/

The vacancy in the presidency of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences remained unfilled for a considerable time. There were no uncompromised persons who could have been selected for that eminent position. It was possible to turn people with elementary school education into academicians, but for the presidents some kind of "figure" was necessary. The Kremlin dispatched a certain Gorin to this post from Moscow. Although Belorussian by nationality and coming from western Belorussia, he would not speak the language and had changed his Belorussian name, Koliady, to the more euphonious Gorin. He considered his specialty to be history. Young, arrogant, and demanding, he regarded himself as an agent of Moscow whose task was to annihilate the National-Democratic Academy and organize a genuinely Communist one, subordinated to the interests of socialist construction. He demanded that all organizations cooperate with and assist him, often with the totally unjustified hints that, to be sure, the National-Democratic Academy had been supported and helped by everyone and he, Gorin, was not sure that such assistance was being extended to him also. In order to make him an authority in Belorussia he was ordered to go to Warsaw to a congress of historians. At the congress he made a speech -- how successful it was is difficult to judge. But it became known that some Polish learned society had invited Gorin to deliver a lecture on some other historical subject and that he had declined the honor-- it must be supposed for the simple reason that Moscow was not certain of Gorin's competance to handle the job independently. In about 1932 he wrote some articles in the magazine Bolshevik /The Bolshevik/, engaging in a controversy with Iaroslavskii about some subject which I have forgotten. After two or three articles the Bolshevik announced that the controversy was being terminated. Iaroslavskii's stand was accepted, but nothing was said to Gorin about the fallacies of his convictions. The result of such a discussion as this, published in the Communist Party's theoretical journal, the Bolshevik, was again regarded in Minsk as an attempt to invest Gorin with learned stature. In practice, in his dealings with the Academy of Sciences Gorin gave no indication of being anything except perhaps a creator of investigating brigades among academic workers whose purpose was to smash the "Nats-Dem Academy". In about 1935, Surta, who had previously been People's Commissar of Health in the B. S. S. R., became president of the Academy. He was also sent from Moscow. Gorin's eventual /39/ fate is unknown (1)

1. It is possible that his fate was connected with that of his teacher, the famous historican Pokrovskii, whom Gorin never forgot to mention in any of his "works". As is common knowledge, Pokrovskii was subjected to severe criticism up until his death in 1932, after he was decisively unthroned in 1930. (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1939 Edition, Volume VIII, pages 387-388).

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661 Tomasz Dombalj, a Pole, was sent as the first vice-president of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. He had visited Minsk for the first time in 1924 as a member of the Extraordinary Session of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R., when the Vitebsk and Mogilev Guberniyas were being united to Belorussia. Dombalj had been the first Communist representative in the Polish Sejm. For his "Communist activities" he was deprived of congressional immunity, arrested, and sentenced to ten years in prison. Warsaw exchanged him for a Catholic bishop who had been arrested by Moscow. It was supposed that Dombalj would head the Peasant International (2); evidently he worked in the Comintern until 1931.

> 2. The Peasant International -- officially the International Peasant Council-- was founded in 1923, headed at first by A. P. Smirnov, and after him by I. A. Teodorovich (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Volume IV, page 329, and 1930 Edition, Volume V, page 89. In the Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia. /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1937 Edition, Volume XXXV, page 17, at the word Krest. Intern. /Peasant International/ we find the reference, "Refer to Mezhdunarodnyi Krest'ianskii Soviet / International Peasant Council/, but in Volume XXXVIII, 1938 Edition, of the same encyclopedia, where all the words with the prefix 'mezhdunarodnyi' /international are found, there is no longer any Mezhdunarodnyi Krest'ianskii Sovet/ International Peasant Sovet/, from which the reference may be drawn that it foundered in the murky and troubled waters of the Ezhovshchina some time in 1937 or 1938.)

According to rumor he had been an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army during the first World War; there were also rumors that he had attended courses at several universities. Distinguished, always gay, vivacious and sociable, a lover of good company, he did not resemble a scholar at all. He himself insisted that he was working on a large scientific undertaking --a description of the rivers of Belorussia. In the generally guarded Soviet atmosphere, collecting material on rivers and compiling an index with information as to their depth, width, speed of flow, and banks made Dombalj's activity rather prone to suspicion. During the construction of the new Academy of

661 Sciences building, he ordered a small house to be built for him not far from the Academy /40/ and slightly set apart from the bustle of the city. The style of its architecture was western, but, what is worse, beside it there was built a pigeoncote. In a free society these "inclinations" would not have aroused the slightest suspicion. It appears that Dombalj was arrested during the Ezhovshchina and paid in full for everything. It is particularly mystifying to note that the trial was held in Warsaw. Another worker who was with Dombalj in the affair maintained that he conducted himself throughout in a most revolutionary manner, organizing a hunger-strike while together with him in the same cell of the Warsaw jail. His learned study of Belorussian rivers was declared predestined for use by spies in the service of Poland, and the pigeoncote pronounced a post for carrier pigeons.

In connection with the destruction of the national movement changes were also instituted in the Soviet consulate in Warsaw. A. Ul'ianov, the son of a Minsk doctor, had been head of the Belorussian section of the consulate. His assistants were the Belorussians. Il'iuchenok and Brovkovich, who had been People's Commissar of Finances before being sent to the Warsaw consulate. At that time Ul'ianov had as yet not been subjected to any disciplinary measures, and later was appointed to the consulate in Latvia. Brovkovich was recalled from Warsaw, was director of the Belorussian State Publishing House for a very short time, was fired from this job, appointed director of a fishing concern sixty kilometers from Minsk, and then arrested. After his recall from Warsaw the consular employee Il'iuchenok was offered very second-rate work in the State Publishing House and was deported to the North in 1931. All traces of him have disappeared. In Minsk at the time there was a group of three persons which comprised the staff of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the U. S. S. R. in the B. S. S. R. The plenipotentiary's deputy, a young Communist and a graduate of the University of Belorussia, was also suspected of being a National-Democrat and arrested.

New Personalities in the Party /41/

665 In connection with the beginning of the destruction of the national movement there were even some changes in the

665 apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belorussia. The chief of the culture and propaganda division, Dr. Senkevich, was recalled from his work to Moscow. A teacher by profession, he became implicated in revolutionary activities in 1950. When reprisals began he was forced to flee to the United States where he remained until the 1917 revolution. By the way, because of complicity in the same affair with Senkevich the prominent Belorussian Soviet writer, Iakub Kolos, was sentenced at the same time to three years confinement which he served in the jail in Minsk. In the United States Senkevich managed to graduate from a university and become a doctor of medicine. After the 1917 revolution he returned to Russia via Japan and there evidently joined the Communist Party. Then, since he was a Belorussian, he was sent to work there and appointed the chief of one of the Central Committee's subdivisions. Rather shy by nature and no longer young he shared the views of the nationalists concerning the cultural rebirth of the Belorussian nation, and while occupying the position of chief of one of the subdivisions of the Central Committee, Senkevich took steps to ensure that all the cultural measures were put into effect. Actually, all problems connected with the cultural degeneration of Belorussia passed across his desk to the Central Committee, and all decrees were formulated there as well. During the purge of the National-Democrats Dr. Senkevich was removed from his job and recalled to Moscow. What happened to him later is not known although evidently he died. A young Communist, Chernushevich, was appointed in his place; he had ascended the ladder of the Communist hierarchy rather rapidly, as late as 1925 he was no more than the chief of militia in some isolated district.

In those days the second secretary of the Party played a prominent role in the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party. In about 1928, the Belorussian, Vasilevich, occupied that position. Before becoming Second Secretary he had been People's Commissar of Finances in Belorussia. According to the established order the second secretary was the actual director of all organizational work, his primary task was to supervise the distribution of Party cadres throughout the Republic. In Belorussia the first secretary was always an envoy of the Kremlin; his duties consisted of making sure that directives from Moscow were fulfilled. In those times the appointment and transfer of Party cadres went according to the following order. If a People's Commissar needed a responsible worker for work either in the Commissariat or in some district, he generally addressed himself to the second secretary of the Party Central Committee with the indicated nomination. Any problem arising in connection with the man's recall could be ironed out with the director of the institution where he was working, and usually with this the affair was terminated. In /42/ such cases the worker's appointment was effected by sending him a so-called "pass". If he was at a more responsible post his transfer or appointment had to be entered into the record of the Central Committee decrees. In all cases confirmation by the second secretary of the Party or an instruction from him was sufficient. If the People's Commissariat had to transfer its own man from one district to another or recall him to work in the Commissariat, the secretary of the district Party committee had to assent to it. In case the district refused to release the man, the second secretary again had the last word in the matter. Thus the second secretary disposed of the Party cadres, and this fact was highly significant with regard to the national work. Vasilevich was very closely allied with the leaders of the national movement in Belorussia and shared their views. All appointments passed through his hands as well as dismissals and in some cases the recall of Party workers, and this permitted him to operate with proven workers and to distribute them wherever necessary. The agenda of the Central Committe Bureau's sessions was always approved by him; he also outlined speeches beforehand and appointed the speakers. The activities of Secretary Vasilevich were much in evidence and could hardly escape the attention of the Kremlin, especially after the 1930 arrests. In the second half of 1930, he was recalled from Belorussia and sent to work as director of the land department in one of the Siberian oblast's. As a result, during the Ezhovshchina, Vasilevich was held accountable for everything that had happened in Belorussia and shared the fate of thousands of those arrested at the time. Less consequential functionaries of the Party Central Committee were also transferred to other jobs.

V. Sharangovich was sent out by Moscow in place of Vasilevich as Second Secretary. He was Belorussian by nationality and in the first years of Soviet power had worked in Belorussia as prosecutor for the People's Commissariat of Justice. It appears that he was a partisan during the Soviet-Polish War, was taken prisoner by the Poles, and exchanged for someone after the conclusion of peace. From his very first days as second secretary, Sharangovich quickly fell in line with the leading Belorussian Party workers. He was

665 unaffected and accessible. He took under his direct protection and guidance the young Communists who were just out of the Komsomol and resolutely promoted them to rather responsible positions, taking notice of their successes and helping them in their work. Most Belorussian Party workers considered Sharangovich as one of their own and trusted him.

The Estonian, Gei, was at that time the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. He had been sent /43/ out by the Kremlin around the end of 1929. Before his appointment nothing either good or bad was known of him, and it is possible that he was a lower level functionary somewhere in the R. S. F. S. R. In any case, his appointment to Belorussia was looked upon as a promotion since the region was regarded as a rather responsible field of Party activity. Its position on the border, the complicated state of its national affairs, and the policy which was being followed at the time within Belorussia, demanded that the Party secretary be adaptable, tactful, and careful in his work. Gei was not noted for his masterful organizational ability, and in his work as director of a republican Party he was not outstanding. He did not vaunt himself, nor induce others to do so. By nature he had no friends nor in fact any close relationships. Nothing was altered in the organization of work by Sharangovich's arrival. At that time everything was subordinated to accomplishing one task -- the speediest realization of the collectivization in Belorussia. Hundreds of workers were sent out in brigades throughout the regions and districts to give on the spot assistance. Telegrams with the sternest possible directives were dispatched from the center, setting all kinds of requirements and demanding reports. All efforts were aimed at declaring "total collectivization" in Belorussia -- about which a telegram could then be sent to the Kremlin. The kolkhozes were given various high-sounding titles. Here and there the first secretary of the Party was remembered and a kolkhoz named after him. The name Gei was also given to a rather large peat factory not far from Minsk.

During the Ezhovshchina Gei's name was removed from the kolkhozes and also from the peat factory. By this sign the Belorussians were able to guess that Gei had turned up in the camp of the "enemies of the motherland."

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665 There was a plan afoot, at first discussed very timidly and diffidently in a narrow circle of Belorussian workers, of maneuvering

to the point where the first secretary of the Party Central Committee would be a Belorussian. The idea began to catch on more and more obstinately after the arrival of Sharangovich in Minsk. It is conceivable that this aim was furthered by the opposition which developed for the succession to Lenin, and possibly the Belorussians chose this moment as the most appropriate. In any case, there was a tendency to support for the post of first secretary either V. Sharangovich or the president of the Sovnarkom /Council of People's Commissariats/ of the B. S. S. R., N. Goloded. Further blows were being dealt to Gei's already rather weak influence upon the course of events as well as his authority among the leaders. Sharangovich cooperated with him only formally, having gathered under his banner a group of Party secretaries from the local districts. Most of the People's Commissars supported the Sovnarkom President, N. Goloded, whose authority was unquestionable. Although not very highly educated, Goloded possessed great natural abilities and was a skillful leader. /44/ His protectors in Moscow were Molotov, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. Another prominent figure in Belorussia was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R., Al. Cherviakov. Gei was almost isolated, and in several cases Goloded simply ignored him. Gei's position was also insecure because he had spent the first years of his work in Belorussia at the time when the national policy was still being promulgated -- when Prishchepov was People's Commissar of Agriculture and had aimed at strengthening the private peasants. It goes without saying that the first signature on all the decisions and decrees of that period concerning cultural reconstruction and the land problem was that of Gei. The Kremlin demanded a more decisive struggle with the Natsdemovshchina and the Prishchepovschina. However, the laurels of "watchfulness" for uncovering "counter-revolution" in the national question belonged to the G. P. U.; it was only after the event that Gei, through the use of academic brigades, was able to provide a foundation for proving the national theories harmful and for justifying the correctness of the 1930 arrests. Gei was recalled from Belorussia in 1931, and some Belorussian leaders saw in this the promise of the speedy realization of their desires to see a Belorussian as first secretary.

After a short while the Kremlin sent the Ingush, N. Gikalo, in place of Gei to Belorussia as first secretary. The hopes of the

557 Belorussian leaders had not been justified. By sending Secretary
665 Gikalo, the Kremlin made it very clear to the Belorussian Party leadership that it had no intention of indulging their desires and hopes of altering the established method of appointing the first secretary of the Party in Belorussia. Gikalo's further activities confirmed this in full. Evidently the Kremlin endowed him with wide and extraordinary powers and instructed him to put the Belorussian Party organization in order, forcing it to be subordinate to the one-man leadership of the first secretary. The Belorussians lost very much by this exchange of Gei for Gikalo. The Party summit had clearly miscalculated. Gikalo's subsequent work reduced their role to naught. He employed various methods for subjugating them. According to the etiquette previously in effect, it was considered inappropriate for even the first secretary of the Party to bring along his own collaborators. Gikalo disregarded this convention, and came to Minsk with a private secretary whom he introduced as his aide. Up until then such a position as aide had not even existed in Soviet or Party nomenclature. This one assumed an attitude of complete independence with regard to all Communists, including the leaders, and was very emphatic in insisting that all his orders be fulfilled as though they came from Gikalo himself. Gikalo not only did not oppose this state of affairs but even ordered compliance. /45/ He did not become intimate with anyone, and behaved quite independently. He devoted a lot of attention to the second secretary, Sharangovich. Gikalo knew that he enjoyed a certain amount of popularity and authority among Belorussians, and therefore he endeavored to bring him over to his own side and subordinate him to his influence. He accomplished it rather quickly. He began by issuing instructions that Sharangovich was to be credited with certain services which had previously never even been heard of. By means of propaganda Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement in Belorussia during the Soviet-Polish War. Gikalo arranged to have certain obliging Communists found to organize the collection of signatures on petitions requesting that Sharangovich be decorated for his past services. As a result of this campaign, assisted by intercessions from "up above" in the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party, Sharangovich, twelve years after his "partisan exploits", was decorated by the Soviet government with the Order of the Red Banner, at that time the highest military decoration. Real partisans were secretly offended by this injustice

557 665 and felt that it was not much use performing services and deeds of valor since what was really needed was sponsorship and protection. By this skillful maneuver Gikalo broke up the consolidation of the Belorussian Communist summit, and Sharangovich fell wholly under his influence.

The Communists who were grouped around Goloded, the President of the Sovnarkom, likewise decided to crown their protector with a decoration. In the first years of Soviet power, Goloded had been president of the executive committee in the country town of Gori-Gorkiy. In those times partisans still operated in the Belorussian forests, and the Soviets were waging a savage war against them. Because of his public capacity Goloded also took some part in repressing the anti-Soviet partisans. Infected with the example of Sharangovich's decoration Goloded's supporters also began to collect signatures on petitions. Only a small rumor was collected because the sphere of his activity had been limited to one uezd, the "deeds" of Goloded had not had many witnesses, and careful people took a look around anyway, to see how Secretary Gikalo would react to this campaign. The question of decorating Goloded was brought up before the Bureau of the Party Central Committee, but there it was shelved and never put in motion. This was a bitter affront to Goloded, and bad feeling developed between him and Gikalo. However he nursed his malice and did not enter into an open conflict with Gikalo, considering that such a struggle would be dangerous to himself. /46/

From the very first days of his work Gikalo had tried to place his men in the most important sectors of the work. He sent to Moscow for one of his good friends, a certain Posse who graduated from the Institute of Red Professorship /Institut krasnoi professury/. Posse occupied several positions in cultural institutions. He was a lecturer in the Communist university, in the journalistic institute, and also worked in the Institute of Party History. Posse was quite a talented writer and frequently placed his articles in Party organs. He was very active in the uprooting of National-Democracy, and Gikalo used him to exert influence on the cultural front. New faces likewise appeared on the Central Committee staff, placed there by Gikalo. At first they always occupied very inconsequential positions, a certain Lentsner was very characteristic in this respect. Previously he had been Trotsky's private secretary, as people who

557/ were interested in the matter explained it. Lentsner understood
665 full well that having been an intimate of Trotsky would make it very difficult for him to carry on any widespread activities without considerable tenacity on his own part as well as extensive support and backing. Gikalo also took this into account. In addition, Lentsner's energetic nature strove after power, where Gikalo also supported him since he liked Lentsner's assertiveness and evidently had known him before. In order to provide Lentsner with lower-level Party work for a term where he might demonstrate his practical abilities, Gikalo appointed him secretary of the Sennenskii Rayon Party Committee. This rayon occupies a rather prominent place in Belorussia as it is very large and devoted primarily to flax growing. In fulfilling the plans for sowing, harvesting, and, most important of all, for government deliveries, the work of the rayon Party secretary is appreciated very highly. Lentsner appraised the situation correctly. By applying force and using highly repressive measures against the kolkhozes he managed to see that the kolkhozes of the Sennenskii rayon not only fulfilled the plan for linen deliveries of flax but even over-fulfilled it. The rayon participated in numerous other Soviet economic campaigns. After these "victories" Lentsner, in order to publicize his efforts, wrote a pamphlet with the title Iz otstaiushchikh v peredovye /From Lagards to Leaders/. Ostensibly the pamphlet praised the Party leadership, personified by Gikalo, through whose efforts the Sennenskii rayon took the lead in forced deliveries of flax. By means of percentages and figures the results of the efforts of former years were contrasted with the previous year when Lentsner had become Party Secretary. There were a lot of distortions and false comparisons in the pamphlet. In this way Lentsner presented Gikalo with a chance to emphasize his successful choice of Lentsner as rayon secretary, which had been fully justified by experience, and, what is more important, to propose after several months of local level work that the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party appoint Lentsner editor of the Party newspaper Zvezda /The Star/ /47/. Lentsner was recalled from the rayon and confirmed as editor; thus this important and influential position, one which Gikalo was particularly anxious to have occupied by his own man, was filled by a person who owed allegiance to him and was responsive to his instructions. In his new book Lentsner began to copy the methods of the infallible Moskovskaia Pravda /Moscow Pravda/ in full.

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557 665 The moment was very appropriate. Stalin had settled accounts with the opposition and become the completely powerful leader. The theory and practice of leadership was picked up and quickly began to spread into the provinces. Even in the innermost rayons, the rural kolkhoz Party members shouted at meetings, "All hail to our leader so-and-so!" Any secretary of the local Party Committee could be considered such a leader. The "leader" accepted all this enthusiasm as his due. The leadership treatment and fawning before Gikalo were of course especially outrageous. Lentsner, as editor of Zvezda /The Star/, lauded Gikalo and spared no words or phrases. His portraits were published in large editions, and clubs, reading rooms, Party and Soviet institutions, schools, and empty shop windows were decorated with them in large quantities. Access to him became a great deal more difficult, and just to see him a special pass was necessary. He did not always receive even responsible Party functionaries. The following incident will attest just how cozy a nest had been feathered by means of 'kadership' and apple polishing. During a banquet, after a session of the Party plenum everyone was shouting, "All hail to our leader, Comrade Gikalo." However there was one member of the banquet who started to quarrel, evidently after considerable intake of alcohol, about the propriety of calling Gikalo a "leader". This incident was immediately brought to the attention of Secretary Sharangovich. The audacious individual was expelled from from the Party, but the affair stretched on for more than a year and finally came to the ears of Moscow. The guilty person was excused by the fact that of course there is only one leader -- Stalin, and although Gikalo is an excellent Party director still he is not a leader. The guilty man was reinstated in the Party, with a reprimand, however, for "quarreling without cause". At the time there were five Party secretaries in various fields of activity, all perpetually guarded by G. P. U. agents.

Purges 1933 and 1934

665 661 *In 1933 there was a purge in the* Party. Gikalo used it to get rid of certain elements which were troublesome to him and thus to strengthen his own position still further. To attain these ends he selected a commission with particular care. It was important to choose a president /48/ for the purge. In order to settle matters, once and for all with the national movement in Narkompros, the Academy of Sciences, the University, the State Publishing House,

665 the National Commissariat of Health /Narkomzdrava/, his wife,
661 Gikalo-Chizhova was appointed President of the purge in these institutions. She was reported to be a partisan from the Caucasus. When she first arrived in Belorussia she had occupied the post of director of the journalistic institute.

The purge was public; those involved had to recite their biographies and confess their sins. Entry was free to all, and not only was every accusatory speech permitted but even encouraged. There were cases of Communists, especially those who considered themselves old fighters with long records and who did not want to undergo these unpleasantnesses, turning in their Party cards themselves. At the opposite extreme, some farsighted people arranged to have their friends come to the meeting on the day of their particular purge and by their speeches attempt to portray them in the best possible light. Particular pressure was applied upon those who had been implicated in the national movement, Trotskyites, and those who had belonged to other parties. They were mercilessly expelled. Some time before the purge, various Party archives had been examined and G. P. U. reports which could serve as a basis for expulsion from the Party selected. In order to compromise directors of institutions who because of their good standing in the Party could not be summarily expelled, another method was employed. In such cases Gikalo usually issued a directive to expel without mercy all Communist fellow-workers of the one whom it was proposed to compromise. Having discredited the environment it was then easy to throw in the accusation that the director had been exposed to unhealthy influences. This is what was done to Sovnarkom President Goloded, the president of the Central Executive Committee, A. Cherniakov, and the People's Commissar of Public Health, Tsentsiper.

Arrests of Belorussian Nationalists - 1933

In 1933, there were some arrests of Belorussian intellectuals;
661 they were not exactly of a mass nature but were still significant. The victims in most cases were young Belorussians poets and writers, who were evidently regarded as a relapse from the mass arrests of 1930. This literary youth had given great promise and was burning with the desire to serve its nation. The second group of arrests was from among prominent Belorussian public figures, mainly those

who had formerly been deputies to the Polish Sejm. Almost all of them belonged to the Western Belorussian organization called "The Belorussian Workers' and Peasants' Union" /Belorusskaia Krest'iansko-rabochaia Gromada /. In fact they were the leaders of this organization and its membership ran into the thousands. In 1905 the Belorussian delegates had been deprived of congressional immunity and arrested. In 1927 /49/ they were sentenced by the Polish judiciary to varying periods of imprisonment, but by an agreement with the Soviet Union they were handed over to the B. S. S. R. Here they were received with great pomp, meetings, orchestras, and newspaper accounts of their activities. Most of them received responsible posts. However, no confidence was manifested in them. They were not permitted to do their work independently, being generally appointed as deputies -- in Narkompros, the State Planning Commission, museums, the Academy of Sciences, etc. The first period of meetings and joyful hopes passed and was replaced by stern Soviet reality which the delegates had not even thought about. They lacked all the necessities of life, not to mention such customary comforts as sufficient furniture and roomy apartments. They confided their feelings to one another guardedly but mentioned their dissatisfaction even to the native Soviet population. Of course all this was taken in and recounted to the G. P. U. One further circumstance made them uneasy. The most influential of their number, Professor Bronislav Tarashkevich, for some reason or other never got to Minsk, and it was rumored that he had gone from Poland directly to Moscow. A Polish court had sentenced Professor Tarashkevich to thirteen years imprisonment. He was a prominent and renowned philologist, and while in the Polish jail had been elected a member of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In vain he was awaited in Minsk; he was not permitted to go there.

In Minsk in 1933 all the former Polish delegates were arrested, and likewise those Belorussians who had been condemmed by Polish courts for belonging to the Belorussian Gromada and deported to the B. S. S. R. Thus in one night a lot of credulous enthusiasts were liquidated. Certain dark rumors were current to the effect that the Polish Defensiva had rid itself of the leaders of the Belorussian masses in Western Belorussia while in the B. S. S. R. the G. P. U. was trying to liquidate the same top echelon of the western Belorussian national movement. In his memoires, one inmate of Solovki

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describes his meeting with the Belorussian delegates and other imprisoned Belorussians. They mentioned to him that they had spent about a year in prison in Minsk. In these memoires of the concentration camp on Solovki, a book entitled Nedostrelliannye, / The Unexecuted - - literally means "The Not Completely Executed" - - Translator / on page three, Pidgainyi writes, These former sovereigns who had become the most obediant slaves, arrived at Solovki " in miserable and pitiable circumstances. " The best and bravest of all was Rak-Mikhailovskii. I know nothing about either his past or his activities in Soviet Belorussia. I can only assert one thing, that this person sincerely and without regret actually said, "We had it coming. " I had the opportunity to converse with Rak-Mikhailovskii several times, and received a most excellent impression ... /50/ He decisively and categorically condemned everything in which he had so blindly believed and blamed himself for what happened. At Solovki he worked at heavy physical labor, always and everywhere reiterating his hatred for Bolshevism and for Moscow, until at last in 1936 he was put in one of the isolation cells on Solovki. Metla on the other hand, who was tall and slender with blue-grey eyes, was a lyrically tender and quiet person. He was sick with tuberculosis, and coughed, but did work which was far beyond his physical strength. Already on Morsplav (sic), while he was planing beams in a woodworking shop, he threw down the plane and said, 'No, I just can't take it. If only the norms were lower!' -- and could never fulfill them. On Solovki he had to dig ditches in some land-improvement project and finally landed in the hospital out of which they carried his corpse secretly. No one found out where Metla was buried. I received this sad news in the spring of 1936. " The Ukrainian, Pidgainyi, had the same sad but warm memories of the delegates, Dr. Dvorchanin and Gavrilik, whom he also met on Solovki.

These Belorussian figures were liquidated by People's Commissar of the N. K. V. D. . Zakovskii, a man noted for his cruelty, who had come to Belorussia from Siberia with a whole staff of trusties. After the murder of Kirov in Leningrad, Zakovskii was made the Leningrad Commissioner in place of Medved' who was given a ten-year sentence. When Ezhov's came to power in the N. K. V. D. , Zakovskii was appointed his deputy and subsequently shared the fate of his chief.

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665 A new Party purge took place after the killing of Kirov; it
661 went under the innocent designation of a "certification of Party documents." This purge was not public and had as its slogan -- "Let's put Party affairs in order." Externally it looked as though the Party records and documents were being checked and collated. Accuracy was required in all files. However, in actuality, this was the most terrible purge of all. All Communists who had ever been penalized, those excluded from the Party in the past, ones suspected of nationalistic inclinations, Trotskyism, and those who had come from other parties, all those were under suspicion and had their Party cards taken away. Lists were drawn up of the ones selected, and their expulsion from the Party was legalized by a Central Committee decree. This work was handled by the so-called Commissioner of Party Control, who had taken the place of the Central Control Commission. In some institutions as many as fifty percent were ousted; everything was done behind the scenes, and it was rare that anyone appealed. However, in some isolated cases Gikalo called in the expellees for examination. In Minsk Professor Kaminskii, a man of seventy-five and a specialist on eye diseases, was expelled after an examination of his Party record /51/ on the grounds that before joining the Party he had been in the Bund and in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. To Gikalo's question as to why he had changed from one party to another he cleverly remarked that all his life he had been seeking the best party and at last had found it . . .

Eventually, of course, some of those expelled were reinstated by Moscow, but this took years. In Pravda there appeared articles about excessive zeal, a too formalistic attitude and too little sensitivity, which stated that some honorable people had been expelled.

557 After the check-up of Party documents several commissars
665 were recalled from Belorussia, even though they had not been expelled from the Party and had not suffered any Party penalities. The reasons were deep and secret. Those recalled from Belorussia were Belorussian by nationality. In the past they had not been mixed up in active national work, having on the contrary replaced the commissars who were fired and arrested in 1930. However, during their work they had not practiced indiscriminate defamation of everything national in Belorussia and in many cases quietly encouraged various manifestations of the national work. They had been embittered by the dictatorial tactics of Secretary Gikalo, and there were other motives as well. These commissars had joined forces around Sovnarkom president Goloded, Gikalo's strong and stubborn opponent. They never ceased to regard him as a possible candidate for the post of first party

557 665 secretary in Belorussia once Sharangovich, after getting his decoration, went over to Gikalo's side. Goloded was a good business man and not a worker in the national movement. While president of the Sovnarkom, in 1928, he carefully studied the economy of the region, aimed to develop industry in the Republic, and supported Belorussian cultural institutions and theaters. Gikalo discerned in Goloded a powerful and influential competitor. However, by his clever tactics during the Party purges Gikalo managed to cut him off from most of his support. Platun was recalled from Narkompros and sent out to Siberia as the boss of the political section of Sovkhoz. D. Chernushevich, the former director of the Cultural and Propaganda Section of the Central Committee, was appointed in his place. People's Commissar of Agriculture Rechitskii was recalled and sent to the Privolzhskaia oblast' to manage transportation. In his place, Goloded's deputy, the Pole Genek, was appointed. The President of the Higher Council of the National Ecomomy /Vysshii Soviet Narodnogo Khoziaistva/ (as the system of industrial administration was called before the organization of special commissariats) Grisevich was appointed director of the political section of some railroad in Siberia. People's Commissar of Health Tsentsiper, a friend of Goloded, was also recalled. A certain Surta was sent out from Moscow to replace him. /52/ All these had been old Belorussian figures. On the eve of the Ezhovshchina they were temporarily faced with honorable exile.

Party Personnel Shifts 1934-1936

In about 1934 the second secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, Sharangovich, was recalled. His transfer out of Belorussia was evidently the work of first secretary Gikalo. Sharangovich, as has already been indicated, enjoyed some authority among Belorussian workers in the first period of his work. He was considered one of them, and he was also closer to them and more accessible than the Ingush, Gikalo, all the more so since he did not display that particular dislike for the Belorussian movement which Gikalo manifested in his work. (1) Upon Sharangovich's

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1. It should be noted even so that in spite of all his "particular dislike for the Belorussian national movement"

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> Gikalo shielded Belorussian literature and art, in fact patronized it, similar to one of his followers - Ponomarenko about whom more later.

arrival for work in Belorussia Gikalo, aiming to divide the unity of the Belorussian Communist leaders, tried to attract him to his side, and in this he succeeded almost completely. But in the course of time Sharangovich became superfluous, for Gikalo and for Belorussia. His recall coincided with the reorganization of the Central Party Commission and the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, the so-called Ts. K. K. -R̃. K. I., which were separated into two independent institutions. Sharangovich was appointed commissioner of party control in Kazakhstan. As secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party his scope of activity had been broader and more varied since every day he had to mix with a number of leading workers and was approached for directives on all problems of Party and Soviet construction. The commissioner of party control worked in a limited field, his job consisting mainly of analyzing all possible infractions of Party ethics and expulsions from the Party, examination of appeals from expulsion, and the imposition of Party penalties. Generally old Party members were appointed to this post, ones who were no longer capable of broad practical activity in other phases of work. On one hand Sharangovich's amour propre was flattered at being appointed as an organ of Party control, at being entrusted by the Kremlin with control functions over the Party in Kazakhstan, but simultaneously he was removed from the political scene, and this did not suit his restless nature.

On Sharangovich's recommendation, the Belorussian, Volkovich, was appointed second secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. Until his appointment Volkovich had been the president of the Bobruysk executive committee and was not widely known. At his new and prominent post he made no impression at all, being sick frequently while Sharangovich was secretary. Belorussian workers had generally come to him to have questions decided, but after his departure not many came to Volkovich, knowing his weak orientation in questions of Soviet and Party construction. All efforts were made to gain admittance to Gikalo himself as he was now the only real Party functionary left in Belorussia. To tell the truth there were still three secretaries left in the Party Central Committee, but they played no conspicuous role since they were occupied with specialized phases of

557 665 activity. Such a one, for example, was the Special Secretary for Transport, Ivanov. He did not concern himself with general Party direction. Thus Gikalo's only opposition was the president of the Sovnarkom, Goloded. Their mutual relations were deteriorating rapidly.

The tense situation in the country at that time became abruptly worse. In Moscow, efforts to annihilate and liquidate the members of the opposition were being intensified. There was a significant shake up of Party leaders in command of military districts throughout the Soviet Union. Heightened "awareness" was being demanded of everyone. Any sort of exposure was encouraged. . . The following incident was typical of Belorussian conditions. Trotsky's former secretary -- a certain Lentsner -- mentioned on page 46, was editor of the Party newspaper, Zvezda. He was a very adroit fellow, and Secretary Gikalo was particularly sympathetic toward him. When the unmasking campaign had reached a rather intense pitch, Gikalo made haste to spirit his favorite out of Belorussia into the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast', doing this without any publicity or the usual Party formalities. Having made arrangements with the secretary of Dnepropetrovsk oblast', a man named Kataevich who was widely known throughout the Soviet Union, Gikalo dispatched Lentsner to him without a decree from the Bureau of the Party Central Committee. There he was given the post of director of the Oblast' Agricultural department. Goloded, being a member of the Party Central Committee, took advantage of this. At a session of the Bureau he demanded to have explained upon what foundation a worker of top Party standing, the editor of the Party newspaper, and appointed to this post by a plenum of the Party Central Committee, /54/ was sent out of Belorussia without the Bureau's sanction. Gikalo was placed in an extremely sensitive position, the more so since Lentsner had such a heavy black mark against him, as friendship with Trotsky was considered to be. In the minutes of the Central Committee Bureau's session Goloded entered his own particular opinion concerning Secretary Gikalo's incorrect activities as manifested in his granting leave to Lentsner and the event became known in the Kremlin since all minutes were sent to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party in Moscow.

It seems that Secretary Gikalo was recalled from Belorussia in the first part of 1936. He received a post in the Kharkov Oblast' as second secretary of the Party. It was evident to all that he had

537 665 been demoted . . . Sovnarkom President Goloded had become temporarily unassailable, and in Moscow he was above any sort of suspicion. As for Gikalo, to be changed from party director of a republic to second secretary of an oblast', even one with heavy industry, was considered a step down.

After an absence of more than a year in Kazakhstan, V. Sharangovich was sent by the Kremlin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. It looked as if the Belorussian Communists had attained their heart's desire -- as first secretary they got a Belorussian who for the third time was returning to work in Belorussia. The ensuing year brought with it many griveous changes.

Yezhovshchina - 1937

643 /this spelling occurs in the original, otherwise the transliteration used is "Ezhovshchina." Translator/

661 In the middle of 1937, the president of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., Aleksandr Grigor'evich Cherviakov, committed suicide. A Belorussian by nationality and born in the village of Dukorka thirty-five kilometers from Minsk, he was a teacher by specialty, having graduated from the normal school in Wilno. In the First World War Cherviakov was an officer. The February Revolution found him in Petrograd where he subsequently organized the Belorussian soldiers of the Petrograd garrison. After the Bolshevik seizure of power Cherviakov entered the Communist Party. When on February 27, 1919 the so-called Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was organized on the territory of Lithuania and Belorussia, Cherviakov became Deputy Commissar of Public Education (1). From the day of /55/ the second announcement of the Belorussian S. S. R. up to his death Cherviakov was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee and then of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. . He was not noted for his revolutionary activities. It is possible that in the

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1. Immediately before this Cherviakov was Commissar of Public Education in the first government of the B. S. S. R (cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsikopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1934 Edition, Vol. LXI, page 195/ (sic).

643 first years after the revolution Cherviakov was attracted by the
661 idea of a national rebirth in Belorussia, and, like many other Belorussian intellectu al, he hoped for a regeneration of the Soviet system and the creation of a Belorussian democratic republic. It was rumored that Cherviakov, during the Belorussian national movement of the NEP years, belonged to an underground organization of Belorussian nationalists (1). He understood the psychology of the national masses perfectly, especially that of the peasantry, and was a good speaker. In the first years of the Soviet regime, when possibilities were more numerous, Cherviakov did a lot of work. Of course he could not proclaim his own Belorussial laws, but anyone who was offended, hampered by his limited rights, or sentenced to a long term in prison or even death, found a possible source of assistance in the person of Cherviakov, that is, if assistance was still possible in any way at all. The peasantry, in particular, came streaming into his anteroom. His popularity was extraordinary. His official position permitted him frequent trips to the cities, towns, and villages of Belorussia. Not following the example of other Soviet leaders, he always tried to be with the masses, to see everything with his own eyes, to talk with the peasantry and the workers. Already as early as the thirties, every Soviet person, eminent ones in particular, had to be especially restrained, circumspect, and careful, not only in his actions, but in words, meetings with others, and conversations. As far back as the time of NEP, Cherviakov, while speaking at a meeting on a visit to Moscow, had been careless enough to repeat Bukharin's slogan, "Get Rich!" Subsequently this carelessness caused Cherviakov a lot of difficulties. Every climber and careerist, during the collectivization and afterwards, took every opportunity, whether or not it had any relation to the business at hand, to remind Cherviakov of this "cardinal sin." Bukharin was accused by using this slogan, of inciting to individual rather than to the collective prosperity which was to be realized through the kolkhoz and nationalized state industry. Cherviakov's enemies were always trying to pin a right deviation on him. However, /56/ none of the attempts to overthrow Cherviakov, especially those made by

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1. These rumors, more probably, were disseminated by the G. P. U. and are scarcely consonant with reality.

Secretary Gikalo, met with success. The Kremlin directed that he should remain as President of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. In his personal life he was very unassuming and not fond of any sort of pomp and circumstance. During a Party plenum in the conference room of the government building Cherviakov left the meeting, went into his office, locked the door, and shot himseld in the heart - with a revolver. When the door was forced open he was already dead. On the day after his suicide this little notice in small type appeared on the last pages of the Minsk newspapers: "Yesterday, due to family misunderstandings, A. Cherviakov, the President of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., shot himself." His corpse was displayed in the club of the labor union of soviet and commercial employees. On the day of the funeral a simple, rough, wooden, not even painted coffin was set on the platform of a truck, without any wreaths or the funeral ribbons with inscriptions which are usual in such cases and born off to the tomb without any funeral music. Nonetheless Cherviakov's funeral turned into a large, crowded, but silent demonstration of the population of Minsk. An enormous crowd accompanied the coffin; policemen on foot and horseback drove away the multitudes of people and ordered them to disperse, saying, "Well, you've seen the funeral, now move on." During the funeral procession, because of the massive gatherings of people, every sort of movement through the streets came to a halt. During the funeral itself there were no speeches or memorials. He was buried but not forgotten. For more than a year Cherviakov's tomb was always decorated with newly-cut flowers which his friends and well-wishers brought. His wife and two foster-daughters left Minsk after the funeral and were arrested later on. After his death Cherviakov left the most happy memories among Belorussians.

Osip Stakun was appointed president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. in his place. He appeared in Belorussia in about 1934 or 1935. We have no information where and in what capacity he had previously worked. It is known that Stakun had long been a member of the Communist Party, which he had joined even before the February Revolution, while a foreman in the Putilov Works in Leningrad. By his habits and bearing Stakun reminded one of the old Party intellectual-idealists, who payed little attention to their personal lives. He was pleasant with others and displayed no sharpness on the job. Coming from the Wilno province and

643 Belorussian by nationality he showed no interest in the Belorussian national work, even though at the time it was very muffled and suppressed. Upon his appointment as president of the Supreme Soviet the general opinion was /57/ that he would, to some extent, take the place of the intelligent and sensitive Cherviakov. However Stakun lasted no longer than three or four months as president, after which he was arrested. His fate is unknown. Then a certain Natalevich was appointed president. No one at all knew him; there were rumors that he had been a captain in the Red Army, but he certainly was never a member of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.. Nothing was known of his past. He lasted until the war, and apparently even during the war was still considered president since he remained at the post afterwards. What has happened to him recently is matter for conjecture since now there is another president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.

645 661 After Cherviakov's suicide the next prominent victim of the Ezhovshchina was the president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R., Nikolai Goloded. He was not arrested when the secretary of the Party Central Committee announced to him that he was being recalled from his post. In his place another secretary was recommended, a certain Volkovich. Goloded was arrested either in Moscow or along the way. It became known subsequently that during the examination by the N. K. V. D. he threw himself from the fifth floor and killed himself. There are grounds for supposing that the N. K. V. D. purposely made his death look like suicide. We have already spoken about his career several times (cf. pages 43, 45, 51). He was president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. for almost ten years, taking the place of Adamovich who was recalled from Belorussia and shot himself during the Ezhovshchina. Goloded had an excellent memory as well as great ability as a director and administrator. He had barely finished the first three classes of the workers' school of the Agricultural Academy. However his natural abilities made it possible for him to cope with his responsible Soviet post. On the job he was secretive and conceited, and was able to bring others under his influence. He was not on familiar terms with anyone, and was always reserved. In Moscow he was able and skillful at promoting the cause of the Belorussian economy. He was on good terms with Molotov, Mikoian, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. However, all this did not save him from death.

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665 661 Even Party Secretary Sharangovich's turn came up at last. After a short time as first secretary of the Party he was arrested. His fate is known from the Moscow newspapers. Sharangovich was tried along with the group headed by Bukharin. The trial was public, and portions of it were printed in the papers. It seems that all the defendents were sentenced to death, including Sharangovich. The impression he made was that of a sincere and hearty man. As was previously noted he had gained /58/ the confidence of many Belorussian Communists, especially young ones. However, in the light of subsequent events his activities in Belorussia give indications of secretiveness and lack of sincerity toward those who trusted him. No Belorussian got decorated for partisan activities during the Soviet-Polish War, yet Sharangovich was decorated ten years later. And in any case nothing had been heard of his guerilla activity at the time. It is common knowledge that there was no unified command over the partisans in 1919 and 1920, and if Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement, the actual participants themselves only learned about it afterwards. His change in allegiance after he received the decoration and became Gikalo's obedient tool left a bad taste in the mouths of many Communists. His term as first secretary was marked by the deaths of president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. A. Cherviakov, and of president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. N. Goloded. Even if Sharangovich was not primarily responsible for their deaths, nonetheless he was very close to the whole affair. In the last stage of his life, at the trial of the Bukharin group, after Bukharin had testified, Sharangovich made some remark as this: "Bukharin, why tell lies here in court?" Even in a Soviet court Sharangovich tried to gain some advantage for himself.

665 Instead of the defunct Sharangovich the Kremlin sent one Volkov as Belorussian first secretary. All of his "activity" took place at the height of the Ezhovshchina. Volkov did not concern himself with leadership but was mainly an adjunct of the N. K. V. D., and "honorary" office which he filled with particular pleasure and satisfaction. A lot has been said and written about the N. K. V. D.'s activities during that period.

665 661 By nature Volkov, the new secretary of the Party Central Committee, was a crude despot with the manners such as chekists had during the first years of the Soviet system. Uncultured and

665 unbridled in his expressions, he produced a repellent impression.
661 He spent his time making speeches at various meetings during which he fumed against "the enemies of the people." Right and left he ascribed various kinds of crimes, particularly espionage and wrecking, to various victims. After such a characterization the agents of the N. K. V. D. had nothing left to do except collect the victims and cart them off to the cellars. It is appropriate to hear the story of a certain Prokopchuk who was a professor of dermatology. At a meeting of workers in medicine Volkov made a speech accusing the professor of having spread veneral diseases among his patients for the purpose of sabotage. By the way, from the Soviet point of view, Professor Prokopchuk's political reliability was suspect least of all. /59/ In the past he had been a partisan in the Soviet-Polish War; after graduating from a medical institute he applied to become a specialist, and as a reliable man and a Communist he was ordered to Paris to perfect himself in his specialty. After this accusation Volkov did not allow Prokopchuk the chance to speak in his own defense.

Volkov sent his henchmen into the country districts, and they operated in exactly the same fashion. These envoys of Volkov, so-called Central Committee instructors, upon arrival in some particular rayon, would convoke a Party meeting and right there, having accused the contemplated victim of espionage and sabotage, would take away his Party card. The N. K. V. D. would then finish the job. One particular instance of this sort became widely known. About six kilometers from Minsk there is a rayon center, the town Cherven' (formerly Igumen). A certain Plentnev was Party secretary in this rayon -- an average director and not outstanding at all. Formerly he had been the village schoolmaster. At a Party meeting, Volkovs' deputy took his Party card away and accused him of espionage. Able to foresee the course events would take, Pletnev, who was sick and very nervous and did not want to have to wait for these unpleasant developments, decided to commit suicide. He shot himself in the temble, but did not succeed to kill himself. The severely wounded Pletnev was arrested by the N. K. V. D. and put in the prisoners' ward of a hospital. He lived, but the shot had severed his ocular nerve, and he was left blind in both eyes. After a lengthy arrest he was set free. The Ezhovshchina passed; here and there, timidly and without any special publicity, new "enemies

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of the people" were beginning to be uncovered--those who had been arrested inhumanly and using such refined forms or derision in carrying on the investigations into non-existant crimes. The Central Committee instructor who had been directly responsible for Pletnev's blindness was remembered, and a public trial was organized in Minsk as a warning example. By the magnitude of the offense and the way events were developing, most people thought that the accused would be threatened with the death penalty. However he got off with five years imprisonment. One wonders if he survived his sentence in the concentration camps.

As a display some saboteurs were tried publicly in Gomel' during the Ezhovshchina. Those implicated were the president of the Gomel' City Soviet (his name escapes me), the director of the City Health Department -- a certain Gurlo, and the head of the repair shops for tractors and farm machinery whose name was Valiukevich. All three were Communists. They were accused of unbelievable crimes, and they admitted them not only in the N. K. V. D. cellars but also in court -- something which made a very deep impression upon the masses of workers present at the trial. By the way, before the revolution Gurlo had /60/ worked at the very insignificant job of town postman; he attached himself to the Bolsheviks in the very first days of their power, and later, after a number of years, became director in the large telegraph and post offices. Gurlo, like the other two who were accused was absolutely not inclined to become a wrecker. However, he "admitted" that through a group of agents he had infected small children with syphilis while they were still in the nursing homes. All three were condemned to be shot. Gurlo's agents, of course, perished at the same time before the eyes of the public, without a trial. Tall N. K. V. D. operatives took them in custody and carried them away in the "black raven." Then there were persistent and highly probable rumors to the effect that they had been promised life and liberty for "confessing."

There was another case. A forty-year-old woman named Novikov was arrested in Gomes'. She was a Party member, half-educated, whose work was organizing women on the kolkozes. She was confronted with a charge of spying for Germany, based on the fact that during the first World War she had earned her bread by washing the German soldiers' laundry. The charge was

665 absurd, and the victim would not confess to the investigator. So he began to try to assure her that her "confession" was needed by the
661 Party. In her simplicity Novikov stated quite reasonably that he, the investigator, was also a member of the Party and if the Party needed someone to admit to a charge of espionage, here he was presented with the opportunity. By a lucky chance Novikov succeeded in being released; a good friend of hers who was acquainted with an influential N.K.V.D. agent helped her. Novikov herself used to tell about this.

They arrested one member of the Komsomol. He was assigned the role of having spied for Italy. Knowing himself to be absolutely innocent, he stubbornly refused to confess. The investigator beat him terribly, put him in a cell, put him on the assembly line -- the fellow was unable to stand up under these methods and was ready to confess. The other prisoners in the cell took pity on the innocent youth, but of course they were unable to assist him. The Komsomel member, by the way, was a student in a school of design. There was one sharp-witted person in the cell, and he taught the Komsomol member how to "confess." At the regular examination he confessed that his contacts during his espionage activities had been the Italians Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and others. The investigator was overjoyed by the admission, having gotten what he wanted and complied with the wishes of his "superior." He fed the Komsomol member, gave him some makhorka, and sent him back to the cell. There he sat for about two more weeks, thanking his preceptor for the successful method of confession. /61/ He was called in again for examination. The elder investigator swore at him for turning the investigation into a farce, but the young man explained that his teachers had certainly been famous Italians. The ignoramus investigator had not had a notion who these world-renowned men were and believed that Raphael was an organizer of spy rings.

626 During the Ezhovshchina the Belorussian Communist press played an especially repulsive role. The so-called newspaper
661 correspondents scoured the various Soviet agencies and institutions for accusatory material. In this work assistance was given by the directors of the secret departments of commissariats and other important establishments. These departments were called "special sections," and in most cases were under the supervision of the secretaries of the Communist cells. When some sort of evidence, no matter

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6.2.6 how flimsy, had been collected, the newspaper, and particularly
1.1.1 the Communist Party organ, Zyezda would concoct an accusatory article in which no colors were spared in inventing ways to vilify the appointed victim. The facts were distorted and in most cases hollow, false, and obviously invented. At best anything positive was passed over in silence or it was presented as counter-revolutionary activity, as the intrigues of enemies of the people... After such a preparation the victim would disappear on the same day into the cellars of the N. K V. V. The existing prisons were not sufficient to hold all the prisoners, and old cellars and half-ruined storehouses had to be used; in Minsk, for example, a former monastery was adapted to serve this need. Arrests were made not only by the N. K. V. D., but also by the organs of the Soviet militia, under the pretence that it was for statutory offenses, and afterwards they were handed over according to special categories.

6.1.1 Citizen S. was arrested just because of this sort of accusatory and lying newspaper article in Zyezda. The police arrested him on some made-up statutory offense. While he was in police custody his wife with great difficulty succeeded in getting a chance to see him during his walk. He had not been accused of anything and had not even been examined. After three months he was handed over to the N. D. V. D. All attempts by his wife to ascertain his subsequent fate were unsuccessful. A year and a half after his arrest an N. K. V. D. agent appeared with a letter from her husband. He would not give her the letter but read it aloud instead. She maintained that the letter really looked as though written and signed by her husband. In it he begged her to send him a little fat and some warm clothing. The letter was taken back; his wife, however, was reassured by the agent who had told her that her husband's conduct was good and that he would be released within a month. The poor woman collected everything she had to make up a package /62/ to send the prisoner a little fat and some dried crusts. They took the package, and the woman sat up every night until morning waiting for her husband's return since there were rumors that prisoners were released from prison only after midnight. Eventually on one of these nights they came and carried off the woman herself, confiscating all her property and placing the apartment at the disposal of the N. K. V. D. Two homeless children remained, one twelve years old and the other four or five.

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564 661 The family of a prisoner[1] was in a difficult and terrifying position. Often they had no means of subsistance, and in matters of earning a living they were considered enemies of the people. Members of such a family were not accepted for work, and those who already had jobs were dismissed on some pretext if not simply driven out into the street. The children of a prisoner suffered real tragedy as their situation was quite hopeless. They were refused admittance into middle and upper schools, and in the general schools they were expelled from all student organizations. The family of an "enemy of the people" was beyond the pale of the already limited Soviet legality. Neighbors and acquaintances kept away in such cases and refused to organize the members of the family. Everyone knew full well that there was no helping another's grief, and it was possible to draw suspicion upon oneself by having dealings with an enemy of the people. Such hard-hearted behavior should not be attributed to indignation and enmity toward the fate of relatives of an arrested man, but rather to an attempt to remain apart from it all or to escape the fate of the unlucky ones.

661 All the Belorussian commissars, their deputies, and many of the directors of trusts and other institutions were arrested. Others were appointed in their places and they themselves were frequently arrested in a very short time.

As an example the changes in the People's Commissariat of Public Education can be cited. After Platun's recall from the commissariat, D. Chernushevich was appointed in his place. Before being arrested he was dismissed from his job on charges of National-Democracy. He remained at liberty for two months and made efforts to get out of Belorussia to Rostov on the Don. This attempt failed. He was arrested after another month, and after a short while his wife suffered the same fate.

For a few months the Central-Committee functionary, D'iakov, an uncultured and half-educated person, was Commissar of Public Education. He was also arrested and Voronchenko appointed in his place. An engineer by specialty, young, energetic, and a Communist since Komsomol days he did not last long either but was quickly arrested. /63/ Uralova was the first one to stay at the job, being Narkompros during the war and still in that position not long ago. According to newspaper reports Uralova has now

[1] [i.e. one arrested for political deviation - Analyst]

661 been appointed Deputy President of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R.

563 I consider it necessary to remark on the absurdity of some statements to the effect that the N. K. V. D. discriminated in favor of the Jews in making its arrests. Such statements are untrue and tainted with anti-Semitism. If the interested party were concerned with establishing the truth, he could find out from documents that all People's Commissars of the B. S. S. R., regardless of how proletarian their extraction, were arrested. The Commissar of the Communal Economy of the B. S. S. R., Waserman, can serve as an example. During the Ezhovshchina he was arrested together with some others, and in prison went out of his mind. His wife was also arrested. The only one to escape arrest was the Deputy Commissar of the Food Industry, Evsei Paksin, and this was just an accident. The high ranking Jewish Party leaders did not escape either.

625 661 [697] What went on in the rayons[4] was unspeakably horrible. The most primitive accomodations for thousands of people were hastily knocked together. In the city of Rogachevo prisoners were confined in the wintertime in a ruined old castle without stoves, doors or windows. The ruins were surrounded with barbed wire and by a guard. People died; an epidemic of typhus broke out, and the N. K. V. D. had to stop using the prison.

The inhabitants of the rayons adjacent to Poland were in excessively difficult straits as the N. K. V. D. border guard held sway there. Whole villages were emptied of their population. Everyone about whose reliability there was the slightest suspicion or who might have been suspected of being dissatisfied with the Soviet regime, was arrested. It can be stated without exaggeration that a good half of the male population suffered from the persecution. A 'troika's' had jurisdiction over the arrested, and the sentence was final and not subject to appeal. At night the condemed were carted away in trucks to be shot somewhere in the woods. /64/

As to the number of victims of the 1936-1937 terror we can judge by the following indices. Before the war Minsk had a population of about 250, 000, and at the height of the Ezhovshchina from four to five hundred were arrested in a night. At twelve o'clock when the "normal work" of the N. K. V. D. usually began, fear seized the city's population. People could not sleep but waited nervously for the knock and the rustling. There was panic

[4] [During the political purges 1936-1937. [illegible]]

7: Krushinsky - 72 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

625 661 in the apartments at the sound of an automobile in the street. Every family expected the dreaded visitors. Often in one family several persons were arrested. Fellow-workers in the various institutions, coming to work in the morning, looked around uneasily to determine the number of victims of the previous night. A person had to make superhuman efforts to maintain his outward calm and self-control at his work. He had to appear indifferent to the arrests of his close friends or people sharing his views. It was dangerous to show any interest in the prisoners or to ask about the fate of their families. The nerves of some who were still at liberty could not stand the strain. They did not lie down and go to sleep but got dressed and wandered aimlessly through the deserted streets of the city until morning. There was nothing to justify this behavior, but in the street one somehow felt more composed, and it was better than to wait for death in your own apartment. A person comforted himself with the fact that he would usually learn somewhat earlier if any fatal blow was being prepared for him. Many tried to be sent to distant, and if possible isolated, places. Anyone who could, tried to go to another oblast', another kray, far from any settled regions. There were cases of voluntary requests to be transferred to work in the Arctic Circle, Yakutiya, or the polar regions, of persons who signed contracts to work there -- in the hope of being saved from arrest. However these measures seldom were of any avail. Foresighted people would prepare a small parcel with laundry and some necessary articles in case they were to be arrested. The terror was heightened by rumors of the nig~~htm~~arish conditions under which the prisoners were kept, tortures during the examinations forced confessions. The prison cells were filled to overflowing; prisoners slept in shifts, all lying on one side so as to take up less room that way, and after a certain time, at a command, all turning over to lie on the other side.

697 661 Before being deposited in the cell, prisoners[1] were subjected to the most minute search; all watches, glasses, aids, bandages which sick people might have, and shoe laces were taken away; buttons were cut off trousers, jackets, overcoats, and buckles were taken off shoes. Particular care was taken to make sure that the prisoners did not keep anything metallic. Being deprived of glasses and bandages was, for those who were sick, a cause not only of discomfort /65/ but of pain. The former provincial and district prisons were altered during the Ezhovshchina.

[1] [Political prisoners of the 1936-1937 purge - [illegible]]

7: Krushinsky - 73 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

697 Windows were reduced in size by the three quarters and filled with
661 bricks, wooden shields being set in some, to make it impossible to see the jail yard or the side of the street or to see the outside world in general. In the yards of the prison special cages were constructed for the prisoners' walks, surrounded by a high board fence without a roof, into which they let prisoners. Special small cells were made, completely without windows, and the number of rooms of confinement of all kinds was increased. The prison shops were made over into cells for holding prisoners. The prisons were transformed into places for keeping people who were under investigation. Those convicted were sent to distant concentration camps. Rooms were kept strictly isolated one from another, but nonetheless news was not only quickly disseminated throughout the prison but even penetrated beyond the walls.

When the terror slackened a very insignificant part of the
661 prisoners was set free. However, almost every one of them had been ruined in health: teeth had been knocked out, ribs broken, ear drums shattered, rectums injured from being forced to sit on the sharp point of a stool or chair leg. But the principal sickness was spiritual emptiness, and for many, bitter disillusionment, dejection, apathy. Those liberated who were not Party members returned to their former places of work, if they had not already been replaced by others. For this "forced" absence they were not reimbursed, even though Soviet labor law makes provisions for the individual's wages to be paid him by his employer if through no fault of his own he is unable to work. Many had been forced to sign an attestation that they would not divulge what they had seen and heard in the N. K. V. D., and this paralyzed any demand that their legal rights be protected which had
665 been mercilessly violated. Unenviable also was the lot of Party
661 members who were set at liberty.[1] They had to go through even more trouble to be reinstated in the Party. The very fact of arrest made the Party member an expellee. No doubt many of them would have been glad to remain outside the Party, but a person who had been expelled and made no effort at reinstatement was automatically put in an incomparably worse situation than that of any non-Party person. Leaders adopted a rather guarded attitude toward those who had been liberated from arrest. They were a source of fear and danger in the event of one of the possible twists of the Communist Party's unforeseeable and changeable policy.

[1] [After having been arrested during the 1936-1937 political purges - Analyst]

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Ezhovshchina -- Summary /66/

661 665 The Ezhovshchina did away with nearly all the senior members of the Communist Party, and of all those with pre-October standing there remained, apparently, only a few isolated individuals. All those who had been partisans in the Soviet-Polish War were annihilated; before the Ezhovshchina they had been considered a bulwark of all Communist measures in the outlying districts, especially in the ones on the Polish-Soviet border, and not a single political campaign could be promulgated without their active participation. Nor did those Communists escape who in their time had been sent to do underground work in Western Belorussia; they were accused of being Polish spies. Those who had been taken prisoner by the Germans during the first World War were also included, as they had seen the outside, even though their memories of it were far from pleasant since most of them had lived through a famine there. All Party members without exception who had, to any degree and no matter how remotely, been contaminated with Trotskyism or some other kind of opposition, were arrested.

661 The remnants of the Belorussian intelligentsia were arrested. This now included people who had not participated actively in anything but who, by their outward characteristics, could have been supposed capable of independent thought: teachers, agronomists, engineers, planners and others. Almost none of the Belorussian poets and writers escaped. All who had served terms of imprisonment after being arrested in 1930 were arrested a second time during the Ezhovshchina and underwent a more severe form of punishment. In addition to the fact that the same Belorussian national workers who in 1930 had been condemned for National-Democracy were this time accused of Fascism, they also received a sentence of more years in concentration camps or were shot. A part of those arrested and condemned in 1930 was brought to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk. By means of examinations and visual confrontations they were used as witnesses for the indictments of those more recently arrested, and they, through the testimonies of these same newly arrested prisoners they themselves either had their sentences increased or were executed. Some prominent Belorussian figures who escaped were the satiricist, Kondrat Krapiva, and the former president of the Union of Belorussian writers, the Communist M. Klinkovich who out of fear of arrest cut

661 his throat with a razor but was saved from dying. Possibly it was just this which saved him from arrest. Others who were not arrested were Z. Biadulia and the budding writers, Brovko and Glebko. /67/

After the Ezhovshchina

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661 After the Ezhovshchina accounts were settled with those whose function it had been to execute the will of the organizers of the terror. However, this took place within the walls of the N. D. V. D. In Vitebsk a certain Grechkin who had been arrested and subsequently set free was summoned to the (N. K. V. D.) court to serve as a witness in a case involving the inadmissibility of torture during examination. The investigator had knocked out several of Grechkin's teeth and was found guilty, but Grechkin was compelled to sign a statement that he would not divulge any information about what had transpired. The document, I Accuse the Kremlin of the Genocide of My Nation, by Nikolai Abramchik, published in 1950 in Toronto, Canada, in English, will provide sufficient testimony to the deeds of the N. K. V. D. in Belorussia during the Ezhovshchina.

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661 The secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee,
Volkov, was recalled from Belorussia after the Ezhovshchina and
sent off to work in Mordovskaia oblast'. What became of him sub-
sequently is not known, but the Belorussians will not forget this black
figure who himself played such a very vital part in the slaughter ot
tens of thousands of people. His cruelty was exceptional. P. Pon-
omarenko, who formerly had been a political agent in the Red
Army in the Far East, was appointed first secretary. A new di-
rection could be sensed in the Party's work, and this was particul-
arly noticeable where the national movement was concerned.
Formerly, national characteristics had been taken into account in
various elections, appointments, and recruitments, but after the
arrival of Ponomarenko the national problem ceased to exist official-
661 ly. The whole group of the former leaders had been destroyed.[1]
643 Natalevich -- a man little known to the Belorussian masses, lack-
ing in authority and initiative, and obedient to the will of the
secretary of the Central Committee -- settled down into the presi-
dency of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. To the post of
Secretary of the Supreme Soviet -- who in fact was the deputy
president -- a completely unknown worker from around Mogilev
661 was appointed. A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally

[1] [During the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

7: Krushinsky 76 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

661 645 A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally unacquainted with the agricultural situation in Belorussian and ~~its~~ people, was made President of the Sovnarkom.* Before the war, Kiselev was recalled to Moscow and appointed third deputy of the People's Commissariat of Public Health of the R. S. F. S. R.

661 After the Ezhovshchina all the higher echelons, including the Supreme Soviet, the Sovnarkom, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Academy of Sciences, and others took measures to efface from the national memory those figures who had become victims of the terror. Whenever it was necessary to apply some legislative act the correctness of which was not open to question, the signatures of anyone already dead or in a concentration camp were carefully concealed. Every allusion to the decoration of individual figures or institutions, such as the theaters, was destroyed /38/ as having been the work of enemies of the people. Under Ponomarenko the long established Belorussian tradition of appointing a Belorussian as second secretary of the Party was stopped. On Ponomarenko's request Moscow sent its own men out to Belorussia as commissars, directors of Central Committee subdivisions, and secretaries. Not following the example of former Party secretaries, Ponomarenko did not try to make himself popular by attending political meetings or other kinds of gatherings. Organizational work was handled by the other Party secretaries and directors of subdivisions. Ponomarenko loved displaying himself as a patron of the arts. He devoted a lot of attention to organizing various types of 'dekada', even in Moscow. He could be seen at theater premieres and at the Belorussian opera. He was also a sports enthusiast and visited the football matches at the stadiums.

Western Belorussia and Wilno in Soviet Hands

661 177 In 1939 the Red Army forcibly united Soviet Belorussia with its western portion.

A territory including a hundred new rayons was added. It had completely different attitudes toward the forms of state life, and, as might have been expected, a tremendous propaganda campaign on the ideal value of the form and content of Soviet power was initiated in the new rayons with all institutions being reorganized on the Soviet model. Soviet Belorussia alone, however, could not quite cope with this new territory, and workers were sent out from the central oblast's of the R. S. F. S. R.. Their selection was not invariably successful --

*[After the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

177 661 everything grew more and more disorganized just when the situation demanded the strictest order. I must admit that the Belorussian grass-roots population in general, and also the working intelligentsia, did not fear the arrival of the Soviets. Many, especially the poorest of the peasantry, expected free land--while the workers looked forward to the elimination of unemployment. The intelligentsia placed its hopes upon being allowed to acquire learning in its native language without being forced to become Polish or Catholic and upon seeing the Belorussian youth freely admitted into high schools and universities. In truth there was much in the first days after the arrival of the Soviet power that was hard for the Belorussians to understand. For instance, the mass purchase by the Soviets of all food products, shoes, manufactured articles and all the other things which the stores had in abundance--while at the same time the population heard every day, at meetings and on the radio, about the happy and plentiful life in the Soviet Union. Food for thought was also provided by the impoverished appearence of the Soviet employees, even the higher ones, who were coming to western Belorussia to work or on missions. Nor was it easy to understand why the former boundary, together with special passes, /69/ was preserved, and why the local population could not get permission to visit relatives on the other side. The newly created Soviet institutions worked far from smoothly. The population was also badly surprised when an unexpected decree annulled all former Polish money with hardly any exchange for Soviet money and when hard-earned savings as well as other kinds of money was confiscated in banks and savings institutions. This measure put all pensionaries and the whole working population in a very difficult position. There were some instances of landlords and other wealthy persons being murdered as a result of the incitement by propagandists. Those guilty of such killings were never brought to justice for the simple reason that Ponomarenko himself, in a constructive speech to those responsible workers who were just arriving, let it be understood that it was not worth their trouble to attach any importance to such blood vengeance since they testified to the "national anger" of the masses.

Simultaneously there were unceasing arrests throughout all of western Belorussia. The prisons were overflowing with Polish officials and government employees, with peasants who in some function or another had been attached to Polish institutions, with volost foremen /starshina/, village elders, and policemen. Old Russian emigrants were also arrested, as well as Belorussian soldiers from the Polish Army who had escaped German imprisonment, any of the masses of those who were caught attempting to get into the central zone of Poland which was still under German occupation, members of the local clergy and any well-to-do elements. All who were under severe suspicion were dispatched to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk, and the rest--to concentration camps in Siberia. The conditions of imprisonment were repellent, and the methods employed during examinations were worse even than those of the despised Polished Defensiva. Belorussians openly admitted to the examiners that the Poles had been Polonizing them for twenty years without success, but that with the arrival of the Soviets, Polonization had been accomplished within a few months. This was the general tenor. In addition to the general arrests there were also individual ones, meaning that various segments of the population were liquidated. The first victims were the so-called Polish settlers, that is, the Polish colonizers who were the bulwark of the Polish state in western Belorussia. They were former members of the Polish army who had been allotted private homesteads with twenty to fifty hectares of land on preferential terms as well as being granted preferential /agricultural/ credits. The Orthodox Belorussian population was not even granted the right to buy land from these landlords. However, together with their families they were now shipped off to the east. One winter night all the employees of the forest service were sent off in the same direction /70/ starting with the forest wardens, who had been partly appointed by the Soviets themselves, and extending even to professors of forestry. It was supposed that there were a lot of Polish Army weapons hidden in the woods and that the forest service knew about them; this was the reason for their deportation to Siberia. The families of Polish Army soldiers were likewise arrested and deported.

000 A few words about the transfer of the city of Wilno to the still semi-independent Lithuania. This transfer was accomplished at the end of 1939. Wilno is a rich trading city which was forcibly seized by the Polish general, Zhelikhovskii, and then included within the Polish state. When the Red Army occupied Wilno, the general opinion was that it would be included in Soviet Belorussia. However, the plan for seizing the Baltic area had already matured, and negotiations concerning an agreement to quarter Red Army soldiers on Baltic territory were imminent. In order that the Lithuanians should have a good opinion concerning the Soviet intentions toward them it was

000 decided to give Wilno to Lithuania, knowing that in this way it would become Soviet.

However, before deserting Wilno even temporarily, the military high command of the Red Army picked a special purchasing commission which bought up manufactured articles with captured Polish money. They also bought hides and leather goods, various types of machinery, etc. All the purchases were taken out of Wilno and exported into the center of the Soviet Union. The bigger merchants concealed most of their wares, but their stores were discovered with the aid of their servants (shop assistants). After the termination of the officially-appointed period for the transfer of Wilno to Lithuania the city remained in the hands of the N.K.V.D. for two more days. The latter liquidated all the "unneeded" elements in the city and the prisons.

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The Communist guidance of the life of the Belorussian people during P. Ponomarenko's term in office, can be characterized as a period of comparative quiet. No one particularly admired his methods or his personality, but there were no disturbing occurrences similar to those which marked the secretaryships of Gikalo and Volkov. The unification of western Belorussia distracted people's attention to a great extent from the various unnecessary experiments and tensions on the old territory of Soviet Belorussia. Everyone who had the chance, particularly the working intelligentsia, writers, poets, theatrical employees, singers, and musicians, used all their pull to get assigned to the newly-attached territory. Most of them wanted to get acquainted with the new capitalist world and see there the horrible suffering and generally pitiable existence of the peasantry and workers. Instead of it they saw, if not an absolutely high standard of living, at least /71/ the possibility of acquiring both food products and other articles for everyday use. These circumstances dispersed the legend of the oppressiveness of capitalism. In accordance with his means everyone tried to get clothes and shoes for himself, and in particular to buy something for his wife and children. Every conceivable employee in Moscow, from the All-Union Commissariats and various trusts right up to deputy commissars tried to get into Western Belorussia. The directors of Belorussian agricultural trusts acquired light cars with small cylinder displacement and often brought them back even to the All-Union-Commissars, for a price, of course, but a comparatively low one. This type of light car appeared not

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177
way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557
they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 562
national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661
marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence,
but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible
and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some
Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of
the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government
representatives and city people in general. This was the result of
the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661
period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]-
the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores;
there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost
valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past,
even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to
light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which
had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N. K. V.
D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was
shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and
senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched
on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly
the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very
scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were,
although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625
of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words
more need to be said concerning the activity of the N. K. V. D. in 661
this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People
were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies
of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to
foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and
employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with
a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was
the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given
particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already
served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 — Analyst]

Evaluation of the Belorussian National Movement

186 So as to bring to a close our observations, which cover many years, we will try to provide an answer to the question whether the national movement in Belorussia was really a positive factor, whether it was of any genuine use to the Belorussian nation, and whether it justified the collossal number of bloody sacrifices which were offered up on the altar of nationalism. In our modest opinion the Belorussian national movement was unconditionally a positive factor in the history of the Belorussian nation, imparting a powerful impetus to the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses, to their cultural regeneration, and to the unprecedented development of national literary creativity, close to and understood by the national masses. As a result of the national advancement, which often lapsed into enthusiasm, the most talented and able figures came forward in all fields of the cultural and economic life of the region. Thanks to these self-sacrificing efforts a high level of research was maintained; there were unquestionable successes in the study of the historic past of the Belorussian nation; a firm foundation was laid for cognizance and study of the natural resources of the region and their eventual exploitation. Of invaluable service to the nation was the circumstance that the old generation of Belorussians was able to inculcate the young students who were their disciples with a love for the work of regenerating the Belorussian nation and to arouse their enthusiasm and unwavering faith in a happy future. The two generations united in a solid front and set to work to accomplish the tasks lying before them. It was fruitful and successful for the simple reason that the struggle did not involve the realization of some kind of abstract idea, as often as not difficult to understand and diffuse, nor was it directed against any particular class nor for any particular class but for the nation as a whole. The goal was clear and the road straight. The young generation was educated to follow the example of the Belorussian leaders, and the time will yet come when it will serve as the foundation for a further advance.

181 The national movement had still another positive aspect. It broke down the perverted concepts which the other peoples of Russia held about the Belorussians, their culture, way of life, manners, and customs; also it clarified the possibilities for an economic development in Belorussia. As far back as tsarist times there had been isolated

attempts to begin a study of the region. /73/ In addition to these well-intentioned efforts there were also superficial, frequently unobjective, studies which put the country on a false track, creating a mistaken impression about Belorussia. The materials on Belorussia were of a peculiar nature, failing to take its historic past into consideration and failing to make sufficient allowance for the tragic consequences of the continual craving of the East and West to master the territory of Belorussia and to denationalize its people. Consequently even such reliable sources of information as the Encyclopedia of Ephron and Brockhaus included some completely biased information about Belorussia and its people. Even Belorussian writers themselves, sincere patriots though they may have been, in some instances distorted the Belorussian reality in their works during the period of creative activity before the 1917 revolution. They resorted to unnecessary exaggeration in portraying the downtrodden state and oppression of the Belorussian peasantry and the severity and impoverished condition of the land. They consciously underemphasized all aspects of this world which were alive and vigorous. Nor were the pre-revolutionary school textbooks objective, especially as concerns geography, since they customarily portrayed the Belorussians as a nation sickly and uneducated, backward and with a primitive mode of life and the Belorussian geography as nothing but a swamp. Through this an erroneous impression was created. The literary, operatic, and theatrical productions, as well as the historical studies in agriculture, which appeared during the flowering of the national movement were certainly not inferior to and in some cases better than those produced by the other nationalities of the Soviet Union. More than that, these scholarly works, literary productions, and periodicals found their way into libraries and university archives in the United States and other western countries where they became the objects of study. They were of great assistance in distinguishing between Belorussia and the series of other guberniyas and oblast's of the Soviet Union. Thus by chance we became aware that in the main library of the city of Columbus a large number of volumes of the scholarly works (in Belorussian) of the Gorets Agricultural Academy are being preserved, together with those of the University of Belorussia and the Academy of Sciences. Even though these works were burned by the N.K.V.D. generally, and particularly when their authors were arrested, still there is the

/8/ certainty that they have been preserved here in the free world and sooner or later will come into the possession of the Belorussian nation. The time is at hand when the western world will become better acquainted with this remote and almost unknown country.

18 The national movement in Soviet Belorussia exerted a positive influence outside its borders also, upon western Belorussia. The heroic activity and determination of Belorussian patriots strengthened the perseverence of the conscious part of the Belorussian population of Poland, preventing it from yielding to enforced colonization and helping it to preserve its national ties and to use every available means to oppose the advances of Polish chauvinists in their attempts to denationalize the Belorussians. In spite of the closing of all Belorussian national schools in western Belorussia, the intelligentsia studied and learned Belorussian literature, preserved its language, and remained devoted to the nation.

Leading figures of the Belorussian national movement were destroyed, together with their pupils and followers. The Belorussian nation suffered a fearful loss and was left without its standard-bearers; the youth was almost totally deprived of its preceptors; the national values which had been created at such effort and expense were crushed out of existence. The ideals of the Belorussian nation had to be hidden deep underground. But did everything perish?--No! Sprouts have been prepared for a stormy growth and development, and those who have gone before will remain as shining examples for an oppressed Belorussia. And the rebirth to come will be the most valuable remembrance and the richest monument to those Belorussians who gave up their lives for the good of the nation.

Appendix I /75/

A list of Belorussians arrested and deported in 1930-1931 for implication in the National-Democratic movement

1. Adamovich, Aleksandr (Ales')	Commissar of Agriculture Prishchepov's Deputy; deported to Solovki in 1931.
2. Azbukin, Nikolai	A professor at the University of Belorussia; deported in 1931 to Nolinsk, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya.
3. Anikhovskii, Aleksandr	Deported in 1931 to Slobodskoy, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya, and subsequently transferred to a concentration camp.
4. Apatsenak, Fedor	Deported to the north in 1931.
5. Afanas'ev.	A professor; arrested in 1930.
6. Babareko, Adam	Assistant professor and critic; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931; died in prison in 1937.
7. Balitskii, Anton	Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R.; arrested in 1930; deported to Solovki in 1931.
8. Vashchina, Konstantin (Lukash Kaliucha)	Writer; deported in 1931 to Irbit; transferred in 1936 to a concentration camp and shot.
9. Boikov, Nikolai	Assistant Professor of Philology; arrested in 1930.
10. Boiko, Ivan	Agronomist; arrested in 1930; shot in 1933.
11. Burdzeika	Agronomist; deported to the north in 1931.
12. Bel'kevich, Ivan	Philologist; deported in 1931. /76/
13. Golovinskii, Aleksandr	Engineer; deported in 1931.
14. Goretskii, Maksim	Writer, critic, literary historian; arrested in 1930 and deported to Vyatka (afterwards named Kirov); arrested again in 1937; disappeared

		in the torture chamber of the Ezhovshchina
15.	Goretskii, Gabriil	Academician; deported in 1931; arrested again in 1936; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
16.	Gromyko, Mikhail	Poet and geologist; deported in 1931 to Ivanovo-Voznesensk.
17.	Gurskii, Mikhail	Artist; deported in 1931 to Malmyzh, (formerly) Vyatskya guberniya.
18.	Dovgialo	Professor and archeologist; deported in 1931.
19.	Druzhchits, Vasilii	Historian; deported to the north in 1931.
20.	Dubinskii, Sergei	Archeologist; arrested in 1930; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
21.	Dubovka, Vladimir	Poet; deported in 1931; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Exhovshchina.
22.	Dudar, Aleksandr	Arrested in 1929 and again in 1937; died.
23.	Dyla, IAzep	Historian; arrested in 1930 and 1931; deported to the north.
24.	Zharskii, Platon	Philologist; arrested in 1930.
25.	Zhilka, Vladimir	Poet; arrested in 1931; died in exile in Urshum, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya; in 1933.
26.	Zabela	Assistant Professor of History, arrested in 1930; deported to the north; died /77/
27.	Ignatovskii, Vsevolod	Professor and President of the Academy of Sciences; shot himself in 1931.
28.	Il'iuchenok	Deported in 1931 to Solovki.
29.	Kondrat'ev	Arrested in 1930.
30.	Karavaichik, Pavel (Liubetskii)	Literary critic and medical doctor; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931.
31.	Korenevskii, IAzep	Rector of the University, arrested in the thirties.
32.	Kasperovich, Nikolai	Ethnologist; arrested in 1930; deported to the north in 1931.

33. Katerinich	Teacher; deported in 1931.
34. Kirkevich, M.	Agronomist; arrested in 1930; died in exile in the north.
35. Kokhanovich, M.	Arrested in 1930; deported.
36. Krasinskii, Nikolai	Professor of Philology; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931 to Poshekhonsk in the north.
37. Kraskovskii, Ivan	Professor and historian; deported in 1931.
38. Krinitsa, Anton (Anton Zhdanovich)	Artist; deported.
39. Kuptsevich, Feliks	Critic; arrested in 1930; arrested again in 1933 and deported to Minusinsk in Siberia.
40. Lastovskii, Vatslav	Academician; arrested in 1930; deported to Saratov in 1931; imprisoned again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
41. Lesik, IAzep	Philologist; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931; died in prison in 1936. /78/
42. Listopad, IUrii	Teacher; found guilty in 1926; arrested again in the thirties and deported.
43. Liazhnevich, Aleksandr	Playwright; deported to the north in 1931.
44. Mamchits, Nikolai	Teacher, Narkompros inspector, assistant professor; deported to the north in 1931.
45. Maruk, Ivan	Public figure; deported in 1931.
46. Mitskevich, Adam	Assistant Professor of Physics; deported in 1931 to Vyatskiy kray (to the town of Malmyzh).
47. Meleshka, Sergei	Assitant Professor of History; deported to the north in 1931.
48. Mukha, Ivan	Teacher and assistant professor; deported to the north in the thirties.
49. Nekrashevich, Stepan	Vice-President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences; deported to the north in 1931.

50.	Rodzevich, Cheslav	Engineer; deported to the north in 1931.
51.	Savich	Deported in the thirties for being a National-Democrat.
52.	Sereda, Ivan	Professor and veterinarian; deported to Yaroslavl' in 1931.
53.	Skandrakov	Professor of Agronomy; deported to the north in 1931.
54.	Smolich, Arkadii	Professor and academician; arrested in 1930 and deported to the north in 1931.
55.	Sushinskii	Assistant Professor of Chemistry; deported to Astrakhan' in 1931.
56.	Trampovich, Pavel	Doctor; deported to the north in 1931. /79/
57.	Ulashchik, Nikolai	A young historian, he was as a National-Democrat deported in 1931 to Nolinsk and from there transferred to a concentration camp.
58.	Ulitsyn	Assistant professor; arrested and shot in the thirties.
59.	Funk, Aleksandr (pseudonym A. Garodnia)	Critic; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931.
60.	Kharlampovich	Professor of Archeology; deported to the north in 1931.
61.	Tsvikevich, Aleksandr	Political figure; arrested in 1930; deported to the Urals /Priural'e/ in 1931; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
62.	Charzhinskii (Derzhinskii), Vladislav	Critic; deported to Kazan' in 1931.
63.	Chernushevich, Nikifor	Assistant Professor of Chemistry and poet; deported to Vyatka in 1931.
64.	Shashalevich, Vasilii	Playwright; arrested in 1930 and again in 1936; deported to Kolyma.
65.	Shchekotikhin, Nikolai	Professor of Art; deported to Vyatskiy Kray in 1931..
66.	Shliubskii, Ol'gerd	Archeologist; deported to the north in 1931.
67.	IAroshchuk, Nikolai	Agronomist; deported to Astrakhan' in 1931.

This list includes by no means all of those who where punished, in fact scarcely more than one fifth of all those implicated.

/80/ Appendix II

A list of those arrested in 1933 and later, for furthering
the national work in Belorussia

1.	Astapenka, Dimitrii	A poet: arrested in 1933; deported; arrested and deported again in 1936.
2.	Boiko, IAnka (Ivan)	Assistant Professor of Agronomy; arrested a second time in 1933.
3.	Vecher, Aleksandr	A poet; arrested in 1933; there are no traces of what became of him.
4.	Gavruk, IUrka (IUrii)	A poet; fiction writer, and translator; arrested in 1933; no traces.
5.	Nikonovich, Nikolai	Writer; deported to the Urals in 1933.
6.	Pribytkovskii, Vladimir	Poet; arrested in 1933; no traces.
7.	Rogacheskii, Petr	Author; deported to Siberia in 1933.
8.	Rodzevich, Leonard	Writer and public figure; arrested in the thirties; no traces.
9.	Sologub, Aleksandr	Poet; arrested in 1933 and shot.
10.	Taubin, IUlii	Poet; arrested in 1933; deported for the second time in 1936.
11.	Khotylev, Petr	Writer and critic; arrested in 1936 and deported.
12.	Chernushevich, Nikolai (pseudonum: M. Khvebarovich)	Poet; deported in 1937.
13.	Shalai, Makar	Critic; went out of his mind in prison during the Ezhovshchina.
14.	Shashaevich, Andrei (pseudonum: Myri Andrei)	Satirical writer and also prominent in the regional studies movement; arrested in 1933; no traces.

/81/ Belorussians who came from Poland

1.	Baran, S.	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; condemned by a Polish court and

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		deported to the B. S. S. R. where he was arrested in 1933; without a trace.
2.	Bursevich, Mikhail	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; arrested in 1933 and sent to Solovki.
3.	Volozhin, P.	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
4.	Volynets, Flegont	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
5.	Gavrilik, Iosif	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
6.	Dvorchanin, Ignat	Doctor of Philology; same fate as the others.
7.	Metla, Petr	Condemned by a Polish court to thirteen years in the B. S. S. R.; arrested in 1933 and deported to Solovki where he died.
8.	Rak-Mikhailovskii	Condemned by a Polish court to thirteen years; arrested in 1933 and deported to Solovki.
9.	Tarashkevich, Bronislav	Professor of Philology; while in Poland sentenced to thirteen years; deported to Moscow; arrested in 1936; no traces.

000 OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS PAPERS, No. 48

ECONOMIC REHABILITATION

IN

BYELORUSSIA

DIVISION OF OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS
UNRRA EUROPEAN REGIONAL OFFICE
LONDON, W.1

MAY 1947

[Title page]

FOREWORD

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Resolution 83 of the UNRRA Council authorizes and requests the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration "to furnish to the United Nations reports on the work of the Administration and the progress made towards economic rehabilitation in the countries assisted by the Administration".

This paper is the forty-eighth of a series which has been prepared by the Division of Operational Analysis, UNRRA European Regional Office. The papers are based mainly on information received from UNRRA Missions and from the Governments to which they are accredited. Economic Rehabilitation in Byelorussia was written by Mary Redmer. Acknowledgement is made to V.I. Wolpert for assistance in checking and in supplying statistics; to S.N. Gupta for work on the preliminary draft; and to the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia for basic material. A complete list of Operational Analysis Papers already issued appears at the end of this paper.[1]

W.B. SUTCH
Director, Division of Operational Analysis
UNRRA European Regional Office, London.

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[1] [This list has not been included with the source --Analyst]

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I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power: the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but vary according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

438 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-
handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern
433 factories arose. The timber industry was modernized and developed
for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard,
matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as
meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning,
and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country
served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement,
and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned
out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery.
The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

483 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent
a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective
241 farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had
their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives.
474 They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of
financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural
machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable
other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated
areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that
of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131

The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.3 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when
parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred
[728] from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small
decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945
a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the
Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some
deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received
a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated
in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia,
Bialystok.

Population

162

At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Analyst]

162 inhabitants numbered 4,983,240). The greatest increase had occurred in the towns, largely as a result of the growth of industry. From 1926 to 1939 the urban population of the B.S.S.R. rose from 847,330 to 1,372,522; while the numbers of rural inhabitants remained almost constant: 4,135,410 in 1926 as compared with 4,195,454 in 1939.

In the Soviet Union as a whole, the population had increased by 15.9 per cent., from 147 million in December 1926 to over 170 million in 1939. However, whereas the numbers living in towns had more than doubled (26 million to 55.9 million); the rural population had decreased from 120.7 million to only 114.5 million.

No census has been taken in the Soviet Union since the war; and the present population of the B.S.S.R. is not definitely known. In October 1939, after the incorporation of the ex-Polish regions, it was about 10,386,000 inhabitants.

The principal cities of Byelorussia with their 1939 populations are Minsk, the capital (238,772), Vitebsk (167,424), Gomel (144,169), Mogilev (99,440), and Bobruisk (84,107). As compared with 1926 the populations of all these towns had increased from 64 to 98 per cent. by 1939.

War Losses

721 On June 22, 1941, the German armies, supported by their satellites, attacked the Soviet Union on its 1,500-mile European front; and in the
927 early phase of the war, succeeded in overrunning the western Soviet Republics of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. For the second time in this century these areas were subjected to German occupation and devastation.

Lying directly in the path of the enemy advance towards Moscow, the Byelorussian Republic experienced terrible destruction. Just one month after the initial Nazi attack, the German News Agency announced that the Byelorussian town of Vitebsk (which the Nazis, according to their claim, had captured on July 11), had been "nothing but ruins when
727 occupied". As the war progressed, this bleak statement was to be true of most Byelorussian cities. In August 1941, according to an estimate by Allen and Muratoff,[1] the Germans were employing half their Panzer divisions and at least 40 per cent. of all their available forces in the Vitebsk-Smolensk-Mogilev sector.

Even after the Soviet Army retreat, Byelorussia continued to be a battle ground as Soviet guerillas carried on heroic warfare against the enemy occupying forces.

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[1] The Russian Campaigns of 1941-43, Allen and Muratoff, Penguin Books, London, 1944.

727 Byelorussia was not liberated until the summer of 1944; and the Ukraine even later, in November 1944. Both were in ruins. At the end of the war in Europe these two Republics were acknowledged to be the most devastated areas of all devastated Europe. Nowhere else had the destruction been carried out in so thorough a manner and on so wide a scale. Whole cities and villages were demolished; great industries wrecked; and farms pillaged and burned. Millions of Byelorussian and Ukrainian citizens had been made homeless, and were camping in cellars, dugouts and caves.

Losses of population were enormous. Apart from army casualties, the numbered civilian dead in the two Republics was as much as 10 to 15 per cent. of the total populations. At the Minsk trial of German war criminals in January 1946, the indictment alleged that 2.2 million Soviet civilians and prisoners of war were exterminated in Byelorussia by the Germans. The indictment also declared that 380,000 people were driven from Byelorussia to Germany for forced labour. (Of those so deported, about 300,000 had been returned home by August 1946). Another estimate of lives lost in the war has been given by Mr. Ivan Tinchuck, the UNRRA member for the Byelorussian Republic, who stated that the Republic lost 1,386,000 persons (mostly women, children and old people). Most of these had been tortured and shot, hanged, burned or gassed to death. These figures do not include the Byelorussians in the Soviet Army who were battle casualties.

Some indication of the population losses and of the present population can be gathered from the fact that in the February 1946 elections, there were 4,043,284 voters in the B.S.S.R. out of the Soviet Union total electorate of 101,717,686. Thus the electorate of the B.S.S.R. was less than 4 per cent. of the total; whereas at the end of 1939 this Republic's population represented 5.3 per cent. of all the inhabitants of the entire Soviet Union. This year in Byelorussia the electorate attained to 4,435,919.

The material damage in Byelorussia was almost indescribable. The major cities had been destroyed, and 9,200 villages burnt. In them, the Germans had demolished over a million buildings, including state and cultural institutions, hospitals, schools, and dwellings. As a result of this destruction, three million people - nearly one-third of the population - lost all their personal belongings and their homes. Some indication of the destruction wrought in the towns is given in the following table.

TABLE I

War Destruction of Byelorussian Towns

	Population		Estimated percentage destruction
	1939	June 1946	
Minsk	238,772		80
Vitebsk	167,424	62,000	90 - 93
Gomel	144,169		80
Orsha	62,000[1]	34,000	80
Polotsk	30,000[1]	24,000	96
Borisov	88,000[1]	43,000	50

1 Population in 1940, according to UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Sources: Statement by Mr. Ivan Tinchuk, UNRRA Member for the B.S.S.R., August 1945; and UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

According to the indictment of the Minsk trial of German war criminals, 1,136 hospitals, clinics and first aid centres were destroyed during the occupation. The civilian population received no medical services from the Germans during the war and the incidence of various diseases increased enormously. There was also a drastic increase in infant mortality.

Byelorussian industry has been systematically reduced to rubble. Everywhere the pattern of destruction was the same. Enterprises had been stripped of machinery, and the buildings burned or blown up. Stationary equipment was destroyed or rendered useless.

Agriculture and livestock breeding suffered equally. Millions of farm animals were slaughtered or taken to Germany. Ten thousand collective and state farms were plundered. From machine and tractor stations alone, 8,996 tractors and 1,105 combine harvesters were removed and taken to Germany. (By comparing these losses with the immediate pre-war numbers of 12,000 tractors and 1,600 combines, it can be seen what German occupation meant to mechanized farming in this Republic.)

The destruction of agriculture had severe consequences on the food situation. In May 1945 the Chief of the UNRRA Supplies Department in the Byelorussian Government stated that, while there was no actual [262] starvation, there was serious undernourishment in many areas. UNRRA Mission observers reported that at that time the large majority of the people had little to eat beyond bread, potatoes and UNRRA food. The shortage of fats and oils was particularly acute; in the spring of 1945 the daily fat ration in children's homes was only 20 grams, compared with 100 grams before the war.

727 Reckoned in terms of 1941 state prices, the direct damage inflicted on the Byelorussian S.S.R. by the German military attack and the prolonged occupation has been placed at 75,000 million roubles (15,000 million U.S. dollars). This includes material losses due to destruction, damage, and plunder; and it represents 11 per cent. of the damage to the entire Soviet Union, which has been estimated at 679,000 million roubles.

The following table shows how Byelorussia's war damage has been assessed to the separate branches of the economy.

TABLE II

War Damage to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
(in million U.S. dollars)

Industry and building	1,263.84
Transport and communications	1,998.96
Housing and municipal economy	917.94
Agriculture	4,480.34
Commerce	141.22
Education	464.76
Arts	32.68
Public Health	122.12
State institutions	241.44
Co-operation	387.16
Public organizations	68.48
Religious communities	161.06
Personal property of citizens	4,720.00
Total	15,000.00

Note: Damage is estimated in terms of 1941 state prices: 75,000 million roubles, converted to dollars at the rate of 5 roubles equal one dollar. The present official rate is 5.40 roubles to the dollar.

Source: Statement by Mr. K.V. Kiselev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Byelorussian S.S.R., published in the Soviet Monitor, London, February 8, 1947.

727

The Request for UNRRA Assistance

648 Rehabilitation work in the B.S.S.R. commenced even before the war was ended. Great assistance was given by other areas of the U.S.S.R., but so many of the economically important regions of the Soviet Union had suffered destruction that the help which they could provide was limited.

Early in 1945 it became apparent that both Byelorussia and the Ukraine would need further external assistance if they were to carry on

727 648 the full tasks of rebuilding homes, restarting industry, and working their farms once more. Therefore, in the summer of 1945 the Soviet Government applied to UNRRA for such assistance and strongly urged that 700 million U.S. dollars be allocated by the Administration for relief work in these two Republics. In August 1945 the Ukraine and Byelorussia were admitted to membership in UNRRA; and on December 18, 1945, after it was determined that they were not in a position to pay with foreign exchange for their own import requirements, agreements were signed between their governments and the Administration providing for the delivery of relief and rehabilitation supplies amounting to 250 million dollars - little more than one-third of the amount requested.

The UNRRA agreement with Byelorussia provided that 61 million dollars would be used to ship food, clothing, medical, agricultural, and industrial supplies to the B.S.S.R. The agreement also stipulated that UNRRA would attempt to deliver the bulk of these supplies to Byelorussia before June 30, 1946; however, because of procurement and transport difficulties, this proved impossible. On May 30, 1946, therefore, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of 1946.

On April 19, 1946, a small UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia and established headquarters at Minsk. The duties of the Mission were to handle problems connected with the delivery of UNRRA supplies, to work closely with the Byelorussian Government in ascertaining the needs of the people, and to observe the distribution of UNRRA supplies. As in all UNRRA countries, the Mission members have complete freedom of movement and observation.

Before the arrival of the Mission at Minsk, 29 ships carrying UNRRA cargoes had already landed at Soviet ports (from December 1945, when UNRRA shipments started, up to April 23, 1946). The Byelorussian Government estimated the tonnage received at 67,680 gross long tons, of which 58,000 tons were food; 3,939 tons, seeds; 3,905 tons, industrial materials; and 1,512 tons were clothing, soap, leather, tarpaulins, and rope. The government also reported that they had taken from the ports and distributed all but 22,000 tons of the supplies received by that time.

Members of the UNRRA Mission making initial observations reported efficient and equitable distribution of the supplies to those sections of the population which suffered most from the war. Practical use was being made of every scrap of material, and there was no evidence of waste. As at April 23, 1946, 40,000 gross long tons of food had been distributed among 12 regions and eight individual towns in Byelorussia. Eleven locomotives had been distributed to nine different points; industrial metals - copper, aluminium, and zinc - had been distributed in six of the war destroyed cities; and over 1,000 tons of seeds, to seven regions of the Republic.

648 262 It was in food supplies that UNRRA was making its greatest contribution. In all the shops, UNRRA food constituted the bulk of the supplies; and apart from bread, cereals, and potatoes, over 90 per cent.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

727 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a
185 series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power,

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

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as compared to 1.6 per cent. in 1940. Peat briquette plants, prefabricated housing manufacture, and food processing plants are also to be launched. Except for the planned construction of factories to produce tractors and motor trucks - and these will be assembly plants rather than manufacturing ones - no heavy industry is to be established. The production of agricultural machinery will be a new feature in Byelorussian industry.

Also in the five year period, the major cities of Byelorussia are to be restored - particularly Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Orsha, and Borisov. In all seven of these cities peat plants are to be rebuilt, and in most of them, brick plants and other industries such as porcelain works, clothing factories, tanneries, food processing plants, match factories, and agricultural machinery plants. Municipal and cultural services are to be restored, and housing is to be replaced. In the towns of the B.S.S.R. as a whole, 2.7 million square metres of state-owned housing space are to be made available for occupancy in the period 1946-50, including 650,000 square metres to be furnished by local soviets. An additional 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home owners assisted by the state loans.

In the sphere of cultural development, the number of schools in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is scheduled to be 11,375, with an attendance of 1.5 million. The number of hospital beds is to reach 30,000.

Considerable industrial expansion is also planned for the western regions of Byelorussia. According to the plan, these regions are to contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western area is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity in 1950. Other food processing factories are to be built, as well as a number of textile and clothing factories. Electric power stations are to be restored and new ones built, including hydro-electric stations. These are a major need in the western regions, which in 1938 had power facilities that supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland, and were undeveloped in comparison with the Soviet Byelorussia.

II AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND FISHING

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Before the war Byelorussia was one of the largest flax and potato-growing areas in the Soviet Union. In 1937, two years before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia, there were 255,000 hectares sown to flax and 631,000 hectares sown to potatoes in the B.S.S.R. The chief food crop produced in this Republic was grain (rye, wheat, oats, and barley), which occupied about 60 per cent. of the total area sown. In 1937 2,243,500 hectares were planted in grain, including 242,500 hectares of wheat, which before 1917 was produced on a very small scale.

The following table shows the area of the principal crops in the Byelorussian Republic in 1932 and 1937, compared with cultivated areas in the Soviet Union as a whole.

TABLE III

Byelorussian S.S.R.: Area of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
(thousand hectares)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	111	242.5	34,500	41,300
Rye	1,313	n.a.	25,800	22,700
Oats	613	"	15,400	17,600
All grain total	2,627	2,243.5	99,700	104,400
Potatoes	619	631	6,100	6,900
Flax and hemp	279	255	2,500[1]	2,125[1]
Orchards and gardens	76	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total area under crop	3,983	3,514	134,400	135,300

1 Flax only.

Note: n.a. means not available.

Sources: Development of the Soviet Economy, Moscow, 1940; Second Five Year Plan, Vol. II, Moscow, 1934; Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939; and Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939.

From 1932 to 1937, as the table shows, there was a decrease of 468,000 hectares in the area under cultivation in the B.S.S.R. Average yields of all crops, however, had been increased to a great extent, so that total production was raised by several million tons.

TABLE IV

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Byelorussian S.S.R.: Production of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937

(thousand metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	77.4	202.6	20,310.0	46,860.0
Other grain	1,616.3	1,618.3	49,480.0	73,430.0
Total grain	1,693.7	1,820.9	69,790.0	120,290.0
Potatoes	5,061.0	7,005.6	43,070.0	65,630.0
Flax	57.4	71.4	500.0	n.a.

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939; and Socialist Agriculture, Moscow, 1939.

Since the natural fertility of Byelorussian soil is not very high, improvements in the yields of various crops depend greatly on efficient cultivation, particularly on generous fertilizing, and other modern measures (including mechanization) which were widely applied on the farms of the U.S.S.R. during the collectivization of agriculture.

Collective Farms (Kolkhozes)

474 The greatest agricultural problems of the Soviet Union have been to increase the area under cultivation, to improve the methods of production, to raise yields per hectare as well as total production, and from this increased production, to insure that adequate supplies of food reach the towns and factories. The primary means of achieving these aims was the organization of individual farmers into collectives (kolkhozes), in which they could jointly maintain their livestock and work the land, using the most scientific methods of livestock breeding, soil cultivation, crop rotation and fertilizing, but above all, increasing the use of farm machinery. In the long run mechanization, with the replacement of horses by tractors, makes a greater area available for grain and other agricultural products such as potatoes and flax.

475 An outstanding feature of these new developments was the establishment of machine and tractor stations (M.T.S.), in which the government concentrated thousands of tractors, threshers, combines, and other large machines. The M.T.S., which had their own workshops and staffs of mechanics, carried out all the mechanized farm work for the collectives - ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. - in return for which they received fixed fees, payable in agricultural produce.

474 As a result of the growth of collectivization and the M.T.S., the need for human labour decreased; and the entire process of production was reduced to about half the number of work days required on individual farms. By the end of the second Five Year Plan (1938) there were 242,392 collective farms in the Soviet Union; 9,665 of them were located in Byelorussia. Altogether they cultivated 85 per cent. of the total area sown in the U.S.S.R. and produced the bulk of the grain, cotton, sugar, flax, and other raw materials required for the population, industry, and export. At the same time, the individual plots which the kolkhoz members were permitted to keep were furnishing a large part of the berries, fruit, and vegetables which appeared in the city markets.

There were two principal ways in which collective farms delivered agricultural products to the government: through payments in kind to the M.T.S. and the flour mills; and through direct sales of a certain quota. Whatever remained after the fulfilment of the quota, the collectives could distribute among their members.

As has been said, the Byelorussian Republic by 1938 had 9,665 collective farms, which in that year cultivated 2.8 million of the 3.3 million hectares sown in the Republic. That is, Byelorussian kolkhozes were responsible for tilling nearly 85 per cent. of the cultivated area of the Republic in 1938, while the machine and tractor stations were serving nearly 87 per cent. of the total crop area, not only the collectives, but some individual farms as well.[1] In the B.S.S.R. the number of M.T.S. had steadily increased from 63 in 1932 to 200 by 1937, and just before the German attack in June 1941 there were 342 machine and tractor stations in the Republic. The increase after 1937 was largely due to the growth of mechanization in Western Byelorussia, where under the Soviet system more than 100 of these stations were organized. (See next section.)[1]

407 A large number of machines was available in the Republic before the war, both in the M.T.S. and on individual farms. From 1932 to 1937 the number of tractors in the B.S.S.R. grew from 3,200 to 8,100; and by June 1941 the Republic had 12,000 tractors. In 1932 there had been only four harvesting combines in operation in Byelorussia; by the end of 1937 the number had risen to 674; and in June 1941 the Republic had 1,500 combines and 2,300 threshers at work. In addition to tractors and combines, trucks have also played an important part in the mechanization of Byelorussian agriculture. By 1938 the Republic possessed 4,237 trucks for farm purposes; and their total carrying capacity was reckoned at 7,600 tons. (Compare 195,800 trucks in the U.S.S.R. as a whole, with 352,100 tons carrying capacity.) At the

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[1] According to a recent statement by the Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture, work on the cropland "before the war" was 60 per cent. mechanized. This lower percentage is explained by the fact that up to June 1941 Western Byelorussia was still in process of mechanization, and far behind other regions of the B.S.S.R.

[1] [See cat 116, pp 26-27 -- Analyst]

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

727 231 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared, and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 241 433 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with weeds and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

000 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in the war period from June 1941 to the summer of 1944--Analyst]

Destruction of the Lenin Collective Farm[1]

474 The Lenin Collective Farm consisting of three villages and one sub-village, comprises an area of 1,500 hectares situated about 30 kilometres south of Minsk. It was organized in 1930 with 100 households, which had increased to about 200 by the outbreak of the war. At present there are 172 households with a population of 572 persons, of whom 208 are workers. Of these workers, only 57 are men. This proportion is explained partly by the shortage of men, and partly by the fact that a number of men reside in the village but work off the farm. There are 150 school children, and the remainder of the population are pre-school children, aged persons, and invalids.

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727 During the German occupation, enemy forces were not situated in these villages; but punitive expeditions would come at intervals from Minsk, surround a village, and proceed to terrorize and kill the inhabitants. On at least one occasion the villages were bombed. The local people believe that the Germans were using the villages for target practice. In all, 177 people were killed during the war, of whom 20 were killed while fighting at the front, and the rest were civilians. Eight entire families were destroyed, and every family without exception suffered the loss of one or more members. Numerous children were orphaned.

The people remained on the farm during the first year of German occupation; then in the summer of 1942 they all fled to the forests - 70 leaving in a single day - and did not return to the farm until after liberation in 1944. Seventy-five members of the collective were partisans, in addition to those who served in the army.

The farm was thus completely abandoned for two years. The people returned late in the summer of 1944 to find their farm stripped of machinery, most of the barns and sheds burned, and nearly half of the dwellings destroyed. All the livestock not removed to the woods with the people had been either killed or driven off by the Germans before their retreat. The following losses were enumerated by the Collective Farm Chairman:

> Dwellings. Seventy-two houses, including adjacent sheds; a clubhouse with accommodation for 160 people; and a large schoolhouse.
>
> Barns and stables. Three large grain barns; three stables for horses; two stables for cows (120 animals capacity each); a pig shelter large enough for 150 animals; and a poultry farm with capacity for 260 hens.
>
> Machinery and tools. Four tractors; three straw cutters; one silage cutter; two root cutters for making fodder; one clover thresher; one three-ton truck; and three narrow-row seeders.

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[1] Report by Davis McEntire, UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, December 13, 1946.

474 727 The farmers had hidden their ploughs, harrows, and small implements so that these were available with which to begin farming again in 1944; but all the heavy equipment was lost. Livestock losses amounted to 500 cattle, 125 horses, approximately 1,000 pigs, and about 800 sheep and goats. The peasants had taken their horses into the forests, and of those, 40 were brought back at liberation. These 40 horses and four cows were the sum total of livestock on hand at liberation.

In 1944, owing to the lateness of the season and to lack of implements, seeds and livestock, the farmers were able to sow only a very small part of their land. Most of the area brought into cultivation that first year had to be spaded by hand, because there was no draught power. In 1945 the farmers succeeded in bringing half of their their cropland under cultivation, still substituting hand spading for ploughing to a considerable extent.

As stated earlier, the area of this collective is 1,500 hectares. About 200 lectares are in meadows, 69 hectares in woods, and 421 hectares in pastures, gullies, and roads. The pre-war crop area was 810 hectares, and in 1946, this had been largely restored, except for hops, but not the pre-war yields. The following table shows the areas of cultivation in 1945 and 1946.

TABLE V

241 474 Lenin Collective Farm, Minsk Raion, Byelorussian S.S.R.: Crop Areas in 1945 and 1946
(in hectares)

Grain	1945		1946	
Oats	125		155	
Barley	75		75	
Wheat	25		19	
Winter rye	nil		186	
Winter wheat	"		8.5	
Buckwheat	10		8	
Total grain		235		451.5
Potatoes	100		94	
Vegetables	20		14	
Lupin (sown with rye)	nil		(83)	
Lupin (for seed)	10		9	
Clover	nil		90	
Hops	"		2[1]	
Total area sown		365		660
Fallow		445		150
Total cropland		810		810

[1] Pre-war area of hopyard, 4.5 hectares

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

474 Special mention should be made of the hopyard, which before the war was a very profitable enterprise, bringing in a gross income of 65,000 roubles in 1940. The hops died out during the war and were replanted in 1946; they are expected to produce a marketable crop this year (1947).

433 241 474 Productivity of the Lenin collective farm[1] in 1946 was down to 40 per cent. below pre-war yields. The grain yield was 1.0 to 1.2 metric tons per hectare, compared with yields of 1.6 to 1.8 tons per hectare before the war. The potato crop was only 8 tons per hectare, half the pre-war yield of 16 tons, because the farm had unusually bad luck with potatoes in 1946, several fields being washed out completely.

The extreme decline is attributed to shortages of artificial fertilizers, formerly used in large amounts; the shortage of manure, resulting from the greatly diminished livestock herds; and the lack of machinery and manpower.

Ploughing is shallower than before the war; and seed bed preparation, less careful. The farmers realize that their ploughing and seed bed preparation are below the standards of good farm practice, but they are unable to do better until they get more tractors, implements, and horses. Before the war this farm customarily hired three or four tractors from the M.T.S.; in 1946 it was able to secure only one. Only 86 horses were available in 1946, and these on the average were smaller than before the war, and could not be fed as well. However, productivity in 1946 was greater than in the preceding year, chiefly because the farm had more men, more horses, and more equipment.

The Extent of the Post-War Recovery

433 241 In the Byelorussian Republic as a whole the crop year 1945 was the first full year of reoccupation by Byelorussians. By 1946 agricultural production had made definite progress toward supplying the population with food. The sown area in 1946 reached 76 per cent. of pre-war, but the level of yields was depressed by inadequate soil preparation, shortages of fertilizers, and unfavourable weather. As a result the grain crop, although better than in 1945, was still only half of pre-war. The vegetable crop, grown largely from UNRRA seeds, was from 75 to 80 per cent. of pre-war in total production; while the potato crop, because rainfall was heavy during part of the growing season and because plantings were only 60 per cent. of pre-war, reached less than half pre-war in total output.

Seed Production

433 246 The inadequacy of seed supplies has been a serious hindrance to full recovery of the pre-war area of cultivation. Particularly short were vegetable seeds (except potatoes), clovers, vetch, and timothy and other grasses, most of which are biennials or perennials requiring two years for the production of seed. There is also a shortage of flax seed;

[1] [See cat 116, pp. 15-16 [illegible]]

433 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre
for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then
246 further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the
diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

433 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertilizer available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any

407 tractors in time for either the spring or the autumn ploughing season in 1946. The first shipment of UNRRA tractors arrived in the Republic in December. Altogether, UNRRA expects to deliver about 800 tractors. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture gave the Mission an estimate that 20,000 15-horsepower tractor units would be needed to reorganize farm work on an adequate level of mechanization.[1]

In speaking of the need for farm machinery in this Republic, the UNRRA Mission said: "It is important to recognize that Byelorussian farming is not a hand-tool agriculture. Rehabilitation and recovery here does not mean a better hoe - it means a better tractor. It means more combine threshers, more grain drills and mechanized equipment. Rehabilitation of agriculture here means re-establishment of the pre-war rate of mechanization of farms, which, in turn, will release labour for still more tractor factories and still more industrialisation. Byelorussian farmers spaded by hand 200,000 hectares (half a million acres) in 1945 and half that amount in 1946. Such labours do great credit to the industry of the farmers, but a hungry Byelorussia and a hungry world will not be fed by such primitive farming methods."

Farm Buildings

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362 By the end of 1946 enough housing had been repaired or built in the B.S.S.R. to enable 250,000 families (about 1.5 million people) to move from dugouts or caves into houses. Rural schools had also been transferred from dugouts to new premises. The Byelorussian newspaper *Sovietskaya Byelorussia* (issues of December 17 and 24, 1946) reported that 254,000 houses had been restored in rural areas since liberation. Eighty-two thousand had been rebuilt in 1944, 112,000 in 1945, and 60,000 in 1946, and 45,556 houses were still in process of construction. As at the end of 1946, 10,000 rural families (50,000 people) were still living in dugouts and caves.

Farm Manpower

464 Besides the deplorable housing situation, which contributes to lowered work efficiency, there is a great shortage of labour. Since the war it is women rather than men who constitute the main labour force on Byelorussian farms. UNRRA Mission observations in mid-1946 gave a ratio of four to six women to every man. In some sections, 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women. On one farm visited the labour force consisted of five men, 75 women, and 21 young boys and girls. A total of 43 men from this one farm had been killed during the war.

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[1] The 15-horsepower unit is the common method of computing tractor numbers. Most Soviet tractors are larger than 15-horsepower, but a 45-horsepower machine would be considered, for example, as equivalent to three tractor units. An editorial in *Sovietskaya Byelorussia*, Minsk, January 8, 1947, stated that the average output per 15-horsepower tractor in 1946 was 338 hectares of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, which is 73 hectares higher than the average for 1945.

Livestock

231 Livestock production in 1946 was still less than a fourth of pre-war, and it was estimated that five years were necessary to restore it fully. Cattle numbers in May 1946 were reckoned by the UNRRA Mission at 30 to 35 per cent. of pre-war; pigs at 10 per cent., and sheep and goats at 25 per cent. Horses, although about 40 per cent. of the pre-war numbers, represented only about 25 per cent. of pre-war horsepower, because of age and small size.

One must bear in mind that these figures include not only the surviving livestock, but also gifts from other parts of the Soviet Union. Since the liberation, tens of thousands of cattle have been sent to Byelorussia by other Republics.

The pre-war numbers of livestock in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia, and the Soviet Union are shown in the table below.

TABLE VI

Pre-War Livestock Numbers in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia and the U.S.S.R.

	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic		Western Byelorussia	Entire Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1938	1934	1938
Horses	n.a.	700,000[1]	779,000	15,400,000	16,200,000
Cows	962,800	1,027,200	1,306,000	33,500,000	50,900,000
Other cattle	391,900	878,100	631,000		
Pigs	1,054,400	1,951,000	1,555,000	11,500,000	25,700,000
Sheep and goats	896,700	1,077,300	1,684,000	36,500,000	66,600,000

[1] The 1935 figure

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; and Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941.

In this table it is interesting to note that although in Western Byelorussia before 1939 there was almost no mechanization of agriculture, the number of horses claimed is only 9,000 more than in the Byelorussian Republic (approximately the same area) where tractors and other machines did 85 to 87 per cent. of the farm work.

433 As a result of the wartime decrease of livestock and of agricultural products, the production of fats and oils in the B.S.S.R. during 1946 was estimated to be only about 15 to 20 per cent. of pre-war. Before the war the principal sources of edible fats were lard and butter. Consumption averaged about 22 to 25 kilograms per head. The return of an adequate

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 231 The Five Year Plan , 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries, and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,[1] taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter.
[647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

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433 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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[1] Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

[1] [in 1946--Analyst]

185 grain crop amounted to 119 million tons, and the target for 1950 is set
433 at 127 million metric tons. Production of potatoes in Byelorussia is to increase by 6 per cent., and of flax by 31 percent.

Fishing

226 Before the war fishing was an important source of food supply in Byelorussia, where the many inland lakes and streams abound in pike, perch, bass, sandre, bream, and other fresh-water fish. Osweia Lake, a body of water about 3,500 acres in extent, produced some 500 tons of fish annually, when 50 men were engaged in year-round fishing. At that time the fishing collective at the lake employed nets measuring almost a mile in overall length; but today very little fishing is being done for lack of nets and other equiptment. Osweia is not an isolated example.

[127] An extensive system of fish culture, including the stocking of fish and the addition of chemical fertilizers to assist plant growth in the lakes, was destroyed during the war. The Germans depleted available fish resources by discharging explosives under water to bring the stunned fish to the surface. Many young fish were exterminated by this method of explosive fishing, without regard to conservation. At present the system of fish culture in Byelorussia is being slowly reinstituted, but is handicapped by the lack of nets. UNRRA shipments of fishing gear have, however, contributed valuable assistance in this regard.

The new Five Year Plan provides that "by 1948, pond culture will be restored to pre-war proportions."

The fish catch in 1950 is expected to be 5,200 tons.

III INDUSTRY

438 Before the Revolution, industry in Byelorussia was primitive, consisting mainly of small handicrafts, such as the making of homespun linen from locally produced flax, or the moulding of pottery by hand. Under the Soviet system, however, a fundamental reorganization took place in the whole U.S.S.R. Many areas whose natural resources had previously not been utilized now began to be more fully developed; modern methods of production were introduced throughout the Soviet Union; and as a result, the total industrial output increased about eightfold.

In Byelorussia, as well as in the other Soviet republics, many changes occurred. In place of the former handicraft shops, large modern factories arose, turning out increased amounts of textiles, lumber, paper, glass, bricks, pottery, and cement. The extraction of peat was carried out on a more extensive scale, and the processes mechanized. At the same time, the number of workers employed in industry increased rapidly.

Industrial Population

In 1925, three years before the first Five Year Plan was launched, the factories of Byelorussia were located mainly in Minsk, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, and Borisov. These five cities had a total of 16,000 factory workers employed for the most part in small shops (only three plants had more than 500 employees) and comprising three-quarters of the factory workers then in Byelorussia. The distribution of industry was as follows: textiles exclusively in Vitebsk; shoe and clothing factories in Vitebsk and Minsk; electrical in Minsk; metal-working in Minsk, Vitebsk, and Orsha; woodworking in Bobruisk, Borisov, and Mozyr.

By 1932, the end of the first Five Year Plan, there were altogether 52,000 industrial workers in the B.S.S.R., compared with 39,000 in 1926. Twenty-two thousand of these were employed in the clothing, knitted-goods, and shoe factories. The woodworking and wood chemical plants absorbed about 12,000; metalworking, 7,000; the food industry, 5,600; and peat plants, 4,400 workers. In another four years (1936) the number of workers employed in large industrial establishments had risen to a total of 155,200.

Growth of New Factories

Some of the largest industrial enterprises which were set up in the B.S.S.R. in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans (1928-41) were as follows:

438 Minsk. Two large machine construction factories, "Kirov" and "Voroshilov"; the "Bolshevik" leather factory; the "Kaganovich" footwear factory; the "October" clothing factory; a peat plant, and a brick plant.

Mogilev. The "Dimitrov" machine construction factory; the "Kirov" motorcar repair works; the "Kuibyshev" silk factory; the "Stalin" leather factory; a pipe foundry, and a peat plant.

Vitebsk. The "Krasny Metallist" machine tools factory; the "Clara Zetkin" hosiery; the "KIM" hosiery and knitted fabrics factory, employing 10,000 workers; the "Kaganovich" flax mills, and many textile factories.

Gomel. The "Stalin" glass factory; the "Trud" footwear factory; the "Vesuvji" match factory, and a knitted fabrics factory.

[933] Industrial output in this city increased 100 times in comparison with production before 1914. In addition to the large factories listed above, a big machine building works, "Proletary", produced turning lathes; and another large plant "Kaganovich", was constructed to turn out agricultural machines. Gomel being a large railway junction, railway truck building works and railway engine repair works were also built there.

Other cities. In the small towns of Byelorussia, where before 1917 there were no industrial enterprises at all, a number of plants were developed; for example, in Bobruisk, large wood processing and clothing factories; in Krichov, a large cement factory; and in Orsha, a flax mill, meat cannery and brick works.

433 Altogether, in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans, industrial output in the B.S.S.R. increased considerably. The following table, reckoned in terms of 1926-27 prices, compares production in 1937 with the level of output in 1932.

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TABLE VIII

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B.S.S.R.: Industrial Output in 1932 and 1937
(in million roubles, 1926-27 prices)

	1932	1937
Metalworking	81[1]	233[1]
Chemical	43.9	106.7
Woodworking	115	201
Paper	18.5	42.1
Hosiery	29.6	117.3

[1] The output of the metalworking industry of the entire Soviet Union in 1932 and 1937 amounted to 9,410 million and 27,519 million roubles respectively.

Source: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

The gross industrial output of the B.S.S.R. in 1937 was 1,926 million roubles, as compared with 1,018 million in 1932 and only 116 million in 1913. In the Soviet Union as a whole, gross industrial output was 95,532 million roubles in 1937 as compared with less than half that amount (or 43,343 million roubles) in 1932.

Industrial Development of Western Byelorussia

Of the twelve oblasts which today comprise the Byelorussian Republic, five (Baranovichi, Brest, Pinsk, Grodno, and Molodechno) are in the western areas which were a part of Poland between 1920 and 1939. In 1939, when these oblasts rejoined the B.S.S.R., nearly 90 per cent. of their population was employed in agricultural work. The level of industry, as well as of agriculture, was very primitive, the yearly per capita industrial output being only 48 roubles, compared with 400 roubles per person output in the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. Despite the fact that in the western areas 88,000 hectares were under cultivation of flax in 1939, there were no flax mills in operation; whereas the B.S.S.R. by that time had 70 flax mills at work.

To overcome the relative backwardness of the western region and to assist the mechanization of agriculture, the Soviet Government invested 726,400,000 roubles there in 1940. In the period between incorporation and the German attack in June 1941, some increase in industrial output was achieved. For example, the match factory at Pinsk trebled its output.

727 Grodno, an important town in the western area, before the war had a bicycle plant, agricultural machinery works, a tobacco factory, lime works, and a shoe factory, all of which were demolished during the war. Brest, formerly named Brest-Litovsk, was a city of importance with a streetcar and sewer system and river traffic on the Bug. In August 1946,

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

727 value; the Germans then proceeded either to blow up the buildings or raze them to the ground. They thus destroyed 23 of the largest factories, the railway-car repair works, the machine-tool plant, the "Proletari" glass factory, two brick kilns, the "Udarnik" scales manufacturing plant, the meat-packing plants, eleven bakeries, confectionery and biscuit factories, the knitted-goods mills, and the "October" and "Krupskaya" garment factories.

In their inspection tours of the B.S.S.R., UNRRA Mission observers have noted wide-scale devastation and plunder everywhere; the most severely devastated areas being the northeast and central sections of the Republic. After a visit to northeast Byelorussia, Mission members reported that they had not seen a single factory intact. Devastation of industry was complete, and restoration has had to start from the ground up.

339 Starting from the ground up, however, is always difficult; and it is particularly difficult in the B.S.S.R., where there is a shortage 727 of everything required to do the job. Building materials, electric power, machinery, and transport are all critically scarce. The chief building material seems to be salvaged brick from the rubble of destroyed factory buildings; and most of the reconstruction work is being done by hand. Power equipment of the kind ordinarily seen on major construction jobs is almost completely lacking. UNRRA Mission members even as late as June 1946 had not seen a crane, powershovel, bulldozer, scraper, or tractor in use. Later in the year some of the UNRRA machinery began to arrive, but nowhere in quantities sufficient to make a real impact.

Lumber and bricks for reconstruction purposes are being manufactured at restored factories, but output is only a fraction of normal. Under the German occupation practically all sawmills in Byelorussia were looted of machinery and then demolished when the Germans were driven out. In Vitebsk oblast, all the large pre-war sawmills were destroyed. Up to June 1946 it had been possible to restore only a few. Polotsk oblast before the war had 12 large sawmills; in 1944 only about five to ten per cent. of the sawing frames remained. By mid-1946, although 17 sawmills were operating in this oblast, their work was proceeding on a very small scale, usually in the open air, and with limited equipment. Output of lumber was greater than before the war, but it consisted only of logs, beams, and rough-finished boards, since the equipment was inadequate for well finished work.

Brick plants were likewise destroyed by the Germans, and are in process of restoration. In Polotsk oblast, for example, there were before the war, 36 brick yards. In 1944 there was not one remaining in the entire oblast. In the summer of 1946 there were 17 back in partial operation; and 32 more were expected to be built in 1946-47.
339 The UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia supplied the following description of Polotsk brick factory No. 4, which had been partially restored by June 1946:

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

727 393 433 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May. Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

323 433 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials 433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]

433 manufacturing linen from scraps. The aluminum factory in Borisov was making utensils, but the material available, all of which was supplied by UNRRA, was sufficient for only a small output.

Labour

464 As has already been noted, there is a shortage of all categories of workers. The outstanding characteristic of the present force is the high percentage of women and youthful workers. In the factories observed by the UNRRA Mission, from 75 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women and young people. Many of these are being trained in special schools.

The Five Year Plan in Industry

471 Under the new Five Year Plan for the rehabilitation of the Soviet economy, the volume of capital investments in the B.S.S.R. in 1946-50 is to be 6,950 million roubles, including 2,422 million for works under the Republic's jurisdiction. In the Soviet Union as a whole, capital investments for the same period are to amount to 250,300 million roubles, of which 157,500 million are to be used in industry.

433 185 The volume of production of Soviet industry in 1950 (the last year of the five year period) is fixed at 205,000 million roubles (in 1926-27 prices), an increase of 48 per cent. as compared with the 1940 output of 138,500 million roubles.

In Byelorussia, the volume of industrial goods produced by the Republic in 1950 is to exceed pre-war output by 16 per cent. The enterprises under the Republic's jurisdiction are to produce goods valued at 2,200 million, of which the output of state industries under local jurisdiction and of industrial co-operatives is to comprise 850 million roubles. The following table shows the physical goals fixed for Byelorussian industry under the Plan.

TABLE IX

B.S.S.R.: 1950 Planned Industrial Output Compared with U.S.S.R. Total

	Byelorussian Republic	Soviet Union total
Electric power (kilowatts)	650,000,000	82,000,000,000
Peat (tons)	4,162,000	44,300,000
Metal-working machines (units)	4,325	74,000
Tractors (units)	5,000	112,000[1]
Cement (tons)	320,000	10,500,000
Window glass (square metres)	5,000,000	80,000,000
Felled timber (cubic ")	11,100,000	280,000,000
Dressed lumber (cubic metres)	1,800,000	39,000,000
Matches (thousand boxes)	1,550,000	n.a.
Meat (tons)	46,000	1,300,000
Butter (tons)	10,000	275,000
Fish catch (tons)	5,200	2,200,000
Alcohol (decalitres)	7,600,000	100,800,000

1 Tractor production:	Russian S.F.S.R.	82,000
	Ukraine S.S.R.	25,000
	Byelorussian S.S.R.	5,000
	Total	112,000

Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

The post-war Five Year Plan is a programme encompassing both reconstruction and new construction. Its aim is not only to restore war devastated industry, but to exceed pre-war production. Some indication of the expansion involved may be obtained from a comparison between Table IX and the following table, which shows the pre-war output of certain products for Byelorussia compared with the output of the Soviet Union as a whole. The figures given refer, of course, to the former boundaries of the Byelorussian Republic.

TABLE X

Output of Certain Products in the B.S.S.R., 1932, and Planned Output for 1937
(metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Percentage of total U.S.S.R. output	
	1932	Planned for 1937	1932	Planned for 1937
Peat	800,000	2,100,000	6.06	8.47
Cement	n.a.	110,000		1.57
Meat	12,300	28,800	2.83	2.30

Source: Second Five Year Plan, Moscow, 1934, Vol. II, p.498.

185 433 Compared with 1940, the capacity of Byelorussian electric power stations in 1950 is to increase by 220 per cent.; peat production is to rise 127 per cent. above the 1940 output; the output of bricks and lime is to increase fourfold; and the production of tile is slated to be about nine times over 1940.

Among the twelve oblasts in the Republic, Minsk oblast is scheduled for the greatest industrial expansion. In the construction programme are new factories for the output of cloth, penicillin, Deft-ware, porcelain, peat briquettes, boilers, radiators, instruments, bicycles, motor trucks, and tractors. The 1950 output for the last three factories is to be 100,000 bicycles, 1,000 7-ton trucks and 5,000 tractors. In the city and environs of Minsk alone capital investments are scheduled at the rate of nearly one million roubles a day during the course of the five years.

Another area in which large developments are projected is Gomel oblast, which in 1950 is to produce 787,000 tons of peat, 90 million bricks and tiles, and five million square metres of window glass. (In 1928 the total Byelorussian output of window glass was estimated at 1,170,000 square metres.)

Forestry

137 According to the census of January 1, 1935, the forest area of the B.S.S.R. was 3,817,000 hectares, 22.9 per cent. of the area of the Republic, and 0.6 per cent. of the total forest area of the Soviet Union. Another 2,538,000 hectares were added to the B.S.S.R.'s forest area in 1939, when West Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union.

Timber

313 The production of commercial timber, largely pine, fir and oak, has been centred in the areas of Bobruisk, Mozyr, Borisov, and Polotsk. Timber is considered one of the most valuable of Byelorussia's natural resources, and has figured largely in her relatively insignificant export trade. In 1926-27, for example, an income of 20 million roubles was realized from export of timber, at a time when the Republic's budget totalled 80 million roubles, and the gross output of industry was valued at 133 million roubles. In 1924-25, the only year for which details on the export of timber are available, the timber shipped from the B.S.S.R. amounted to 587,000 cubic metres of firewood and 749,000 cubic metres of other timber. About 60 per cent. of this was sent to the Ukraine (within the U.S.S.R.) and the remainder, plywood, oak, pine, and other products, was shipped abroad via the Baltic States.

The advanced development of the timber industry in the B.S.S.R. is revealed by the number of sawing frames which the Republic had in pre-war years. As at April 1, 1939, (before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia) the B.S.S.R. possessed 256 of the Soviet Union's 6,500 frames.

313 This high proportion should be contrasted with the small forest area of this Republic in relation to that of the whole U.S.S.R.

185 313 433 The goal set for timber deliveries by the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is 11,100,000 cubic metres; and cuttings during the period 1946-50 are planned at 58,400,000 cubic metres. The aggregate timber deliveries attained during four and one-quarter years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-32, amounted to 32,600,000 cubic metres, or 7,670,000 annually. In 1928 it had been estimated that the timber resources of the B.S.S.R. were adequate to permit cuttings of 12 million cubic metres a year by 1932. This scale of cuttings was never reached, but the figure is mentioned here because it approximates the present plan of annual deliveries set for 1950, at a time when the area of Byelorussia is about double what it was in 1928.

The reason for this is that a large amount of easily accessible timber was burned out by the Germans during the war. The Governor of Vitebsk oblast, quoting from official figures, told members of the UNRRA Mission in June 1946 that 22 per cent. of the oblast was covered by good timber before the war but at present only 16 per cent. It was estimated by the Governor of Polotsk oblast that 46 percent. of the forests of the oblast were cut, burned or taken away during the war. Post-war cutting operations will therefore be restricted in many areas, and a reforestation programme will be carried out on an area of 189,000 hectares. Meanwhile, felling will be centred in the dense swamp areas previously untouched and impossible to exploit without extensive development of motor and narrow-gauge haulways provided for in the Five Year Plan.

Of the 1950 goal for timber production, 5 million cubic metres is set for annual production under the direction of the Timber Ministry of the B.S.S.R. An undisclosed amount will be produced under the auspices of local and co-operative industry. Although no full details are at present available, nevertheless, a few comparisons with pre-war production are possible. For example, in 1928 the production of plywood in Byelorussia amounted to 59,000 cubic metres, and in 1940 to 254,000 cubic metres (36.2 per cent. of the plywood output of the Soviet Union). In 1950 the plywood output of republican, local, and co-operative industry is scheduled to be 118,500 cubic metres. No pre-war figures are available for sawn lumber output, except for 1928, when 636,060 cubic metres were produced. The planned output of sawn lumber for 1950 is 1,800,000 cubic metres, nearly three times the 1928 amount.

[439] As for the export of timber, no figures are available, but it is known that Byelorussian timber has been and still is an important source of mine props for the Donets coal mines in the Ukrainian S.S.R. 313 185 However, in view of the tremendous shelter rehabilitation programme in devastated Byelorussia, it does not seem likely that there will be much surplus timber available. Of 400,000 collective farm houses scheduled for restoration, only 60,000 are to be built of brick. An equal, if not larger, number of public buildings were destroyed on collective farms;

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or
6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which
was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons,
or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the
U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans
systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had
eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were
then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the
U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced.
During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the
remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946,
when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had
one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing
at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many
processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which
are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing,
without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a
few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present
operations are carried out in the single building which has been
restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the
match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in
operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a
year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this
output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and
additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
372 electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

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433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

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185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from
433 restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
185 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15 per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced
433 under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in 1950 is expected to be as follows:

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Shoes	7 million pairs
Hosiery	13.5 " "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000 units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000 "

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme, has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk, facilities were estimated to be as follows.

TABLE XI

377 727 Electric Power Facilities in Four Byelorussian Cities, Pre-War and June 1946

City	Population June 1946	Pre-war capacity of electric stations (kilowatts)	June 1946 as per-cent. of pre-war
Borisov	43,000	4,500	22
Orsha	34,000	30,000	10
Vitebsk	62,000[1]	12,000	6
Polotsk	24,000	2,500	2

[1] 1939 population: 167,424.

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

In these cities, all electricity available was being consumed by industry and public institutions, while dwellings were virtually without light. At Orsha, the restored facilities could have furnished light to dwellings as well, provided there had been wiring, switches, and bulbs.

The situation in rural areas is even worse. Before the war many collective farms had their own small electric power stations, all of which were plundered or destroyed by the Germans. The Surazh raion had six small farm stations with a total capacity of 800 kilowatts before the war; but even as late as June 1946 it had nothing, because although a new station was under construction at Surazh, there was no equipment for it.

The present shortage of electric power is a serious obstacle hampering industrial recovery. In this respect, UNRRA is making a considerable contribution. As at October 1, 1946, 30 power units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been shipped to the B.S.S.R., and 35 additional units representing electric generating capacity of 10,400 kilowatts were still to be delivered.

185 377 The Five Year Plan calls for the output of 650 million kilowatt hours of energy in 1950. To achieve this, electric power stations with a capacity of 243,000 kilowatts are to be rebuilt and put into operation. Small hydro-electric stations with a total capacity of 16,000 kilowatts are to be built, and the municipal power stations at Gomel, Mozyr, Grodno, and other towns restored.

For the development of the economy of the Republic, there are to be put into operation electric power stations under the Republic's jurisdiction with a total capacity of 47,000 kilowatts, including hydro-electric stations with 10,000 kilowatt capacity.

Transport

Railways

496 In 1928 the length of the railways in the B.S.S.R. was 2,500 kilometres; in 1932 - 3,000 kilometres; and in 1937 - 3,100 kilometres.[1] In 1937 the railways of Western Byelorussia had a length of 3,415 kilometres, according to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, published by the Polish Ministry of Information, London, 1941.

Roads

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491 During the war, both railroads and motor roads suffered devastation and demolition at the hands of the Germans. The following extract from an UNRRA Mission report of June 1946 conveys the situation with respect to roads in the B.S.S.R.:

> "In the cities visited and along the roads travelled by the Mission party during our 700-mile motor trip, all bridges and culverts had been destroyed. What had once been reinforced concrete and steel spans across the Berezina at Borisov, the Dnieper at Orsha, and the western Dvina at Vitebsk and Polotsk, are now reduced to rubble piers in the river beds and demolished approaches. Substantial wooden bridges, resting on log piers, have been erected at the main crossings, and remain today much as they were when first built in 1944 by the Red Army advancing westward. Some destroyed bridges have not been replaced at all, and river crossings are effected only by boat. Small bridges and culverts have been largely replaced by temporary plank crossings, and there are still numerous winding detours around culverts that remain unrepaired on less frequented roads.
>
> "In our trip we travelled over three kinds of road surfacing: handpacked dirt, cobblestone, and asphalt. The Minsk-Moscow three-lane asphalt highway is in good repair over the stretch covered from Minsk to Orsha, and along the roadside we observed several road repair gangs with asphalt pots and two or three road rollers, of the trailer type. Elsewhere we travelled over cobblestone and dirt roads, all of which were in fairly good condition but are still pitted with remnant shell holes and numerous ruts, which in rainy weather are difficult to pass through. One trip which we planned to make, from Lepel to Bigomel, the partisan city which never surrendered to the Germans, had to be abandoned at the last minute because the bridge at the main river crossing en route had been blown up by the Germans and was not yet restored. Although road repair equipment could be used to good effect along the dirt and cobblestone roads, not more than half a dozen pieces of such equipment were observed during the entire trip, after leaving the Minsk-Moscow highway."

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[1] Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

Housing Reconstruction

727 The cities of Byelorussia were universally laid waste by the Germans, and even today they are still in ruins with great empty spaces and blocks of gutted buildings. Rebuilding is proceeding slowly.

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185 According to official estimates, 74 per cent. of the housing space in cities and raion centres of the B.S.S.R. was destroyed during the war. The Five Year Plan calls for the restoration of 4,200,000 square metres of urban housing during the next five years, of which 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home builders assisted by state loans. During the two years between liberation and September 1946, a total of 1.2 million square metres of housing had been restored in cities and raion centres; but this was the easiest part of the work, since it involved mostly the repair of those buildings which still had some walls standing. Housing restoration will have to move at a faster rate than 600,000 square metres a year to reach the 4.2 million square metres goal by 1950, when there is to be an estimated 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space in Byelorussia.

In the restoration plans, provision is made to erect three prefabricated house factories with a combined annual output capacity of 600,000 square metres of housing by 1950.

The long-term housing plan is to provide 9 square metres per person, according to the Mayor of Minsk. However, in October 1946 facilities were much below that standard, and it seemed doubtful to the UNRRA Mission whether the figure would be reached by 1950.

The present per capita housing space available is not known. But in cities like Gomel, UNRRA Mission observers have been given estimates that available houses are occupied at double to triple their pre-war capacity.

The only available figures on pre-war housing are those for the first Five Year Plan period. These apply to what were then classed as "okrug", or regional cities, of which there were in 1927, eleven with a combined population of approximately 540,000. In 1927-28 they had a total of 3,093,000 square metres of housing space, occupied at the rate of 5.5 square metres per person. The first Five Year Plan called for expanding the housing space in "okrug" cities to a total of 4,263,000 square metres, occupied at the rate of 6.69 square metres per person.

The target of 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space by 1950 is about double the 1932 figure. This amount, including housing in some 170 raion (district) centres, is distributed among what are classed as "oblast" cities (these governed directly by the oblast or regional soviet as well as by the local city soviet), which were 18 in number in 1945. Among this number are all those cities classed as "okrug" cities in 1926, plus seven cities in the western oblasts; Baranovichi, Brest, Vileika, Grodno, Lida, Molodechno, and Pinsk.

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These seven cities were not included in the 1939 census, when the total urban population of Byelorussia was determined as nearly 1.4 million persons. Assuming that the urban centres of Byelorussia merely recover their pre-war population, and if the urban residents of western Byelorussia be included, the per capita urban housing space available in 1950 will certainly be much less than 9 square metres, since at that rate 8.2 million square metres could supply only about 900,000 occupants. The actual per person rate of urban housing space in 1950 is more likely to be near the 1932-33 rate if planned targets of reconstruction are achieved.

727 In the rural areas of the B.S.S.R., shelter demolition amounted to 400,000 dwellings of collective farmers, and an indeterminate number of individual peasant homes. In the western oblasts, as has already been noted, the great majority of farmers are not yet in collectives. In a single oblast, Molodechno, 16,000 peasant farms were laid waste. In Grodno oblast, where 117,000 civilians were slain by the Germans, demolition of homes was on a equal, if not greater scale. Thousands of individual peasant homes were also destroyed in other oblasts. A reported total of 1.2 million buildings of all kinds, houses, barns, sheds, offices, were destroyed in the rural areas. As at October 1946, 235,000 dwellings had been restored in the villages, providing shelter for 1.5 million people who were then able to move out of temporary shelters, mostly dugouts and caves. On the whole, progress in the restoration of shelter seems to be more rapid in the villages than in the cities.

Supplementary Aid from the U.S.S.R.

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On December 31, 1946, the Byelorussian Council of Ministers published in "Sovietskaya Byelorussia" a statement that at its request the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. had adopted a decree providing for assistance in the restoration of raions of the B.S.S.R. which had especially suffered from the occupation.

Under the terms of the decree, 27 million roubles have been granted by the U.S.S.R. for expenditure on 2,000 dwelling houses to be constructed in the areas of Byelorussia most devastated by the war. Built at state expense, these houses are to provide shelter for the most needy: families of war invalids, and of fighters (both army and partisan) killed in the war. The total fund is allocated for distribution among 38 districts or raions which are all situated in the eastern and central oblasts of the Republic. Vitebsk, Polotsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Minsk, Bobruisk, and Polessia oblasts are to benefit by the grant.

IV - UNRRA ASSISTANCE

In the original agreement between UNRRA and the Byelorussian Government was a provision that "within the limits of its resources" the Administration would strive to procure and deliver the full programme of 61 million U.S. dollars' worth of relief supplies for Byelorussia before July 1, 1946. In May 1946, however, when it became clear that the difficult world supply and transport situation would require at least an additional six months for the completion of deliveries, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of the year. Even at the end of January 1947, the programme was not entirely completed as the following table shows.

TABLE XII

UNRRA Programme of Supplies for Byelorussia, Compared with Shipments to January 31, 1947

	Programme (U.S. dollars)	Shipments to January 31, 1947 (U.S. dollars)	(gross long tons)
Food	29,710,000	27,918,000	94,660
Clothing, textiles, footwear	7,015,000	7,009,000	5,346
Medical and sanitation	1,002,000	699,000	163
Agricultural rehabilitation	5,622,000	4,416,000	6,680
Industrial rehabilitation	17,351,000	10,181,000	14,495
Totals	60,700,000	50,223,000	121,344

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

Food

In almost every month of 1946, food supplies made up the bulk of UNRRA's shipments to the B.S.S.R. As at the end of January they represented 78 per cent. of the tonnage and 55 per cent. of the value of all shipments. Largest items were (by volume) surplus army rations (36,000 tons up to January 31); 23,000 tons of fish, meat, and meat products, including a popular canned meat mixture known as tushonka; nearly 20,000 tons of dairy products, fats, oils, and soap; and 10,598 tons of pulses. A small amount of grain, soups, and beverages made up the remainder. It will be noted that no sugar, fruits, vegetables, or animal food were included in the UNRRA shipments.

Early observations by UNRRA Mission members confirmed that all food supplies were being equitably distributed by the Byelorussian Government

648 to the people in greatest need. Throughout the republic in ration stores, children's homes, hospitals, and rural communities, UNRRA food furnished the greater part of the Byelorussian diet in 1946, apart from domestically produced cereals and bread.

Clothing

511 In June 1946 the UNRRA Mission described the urgent need of the Byelorussians for clothing in these words: "The need for clothing is obviously acute. Most people are wearing old, patched up, and ragged clothes. At least half the urban residents seen on the streets and considerably more rural people are going barefoot. Those who have shoes to wear endeavour as much as possible to economize on shoe leather, and it is a common sight to see people walk barefoot where the road or street is smooth, meanwhile carrying their shoes slung over the shoulder ready for use when the road gets rough and rocky. At three factories visited, about half the workers were barefoot, and the remainder were wearing chiefly canvas shoes in poor condition...At the children's homes visited, the children as a rule were sleeping two in a single bed, narrow army-style cots, because of the shortage of blankets and bed linen."

648 The following table of clothing shipments to January 31, 1947, shows that finished footwear and shoe leather, and raw wool and woollen textiles formed a large part of the clothing programme for the B.S.S.R.

TABLE XIII

UNRRA Shipments of Clothing to Byelorussia up to January 31, 1947

	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Finished clothing	368	222
Blankets and comforters	252	139
Cotton textiles	278	154
Woollen textiles	1,288	524
Raw wool	1,134	1,244
Footwear	2,446	1,688
Upper leather	380	173
Sole leather	558	773
Miscellaneous textiles	80	58
Miscellaneous footwear	163	366
Unclassified	62	-
Totals	7,009	5,346

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

To certain classes of priority consumers for example, war orphans in children's homes, widowed mothers, war invalids, and factory workers,

648 UNRRA clothing and contributed clothing are distributed free. The local soviet in each instance prepares a list of persons eligible to receive such clothing. Otherwise, textiles and shoe leather supplied to Byelorussia under the UNRRA programme are converted into clothing and shoes at local co-operatives, or artels, which perform an important role in the production of consumers' goods in the Republic.

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295 Typical of the producer co-operatives engaged in processing UNRRA-supplied textiles in the Novy Put Clothing Artel in Minsk which UNRRA Mission observers visited in November 1946. At this artel, garments were being made for war orphans cared for in children's homes. The finished garments were then distributed free of charge to the children, the government paying the artel for the cost of manufacture only.

Orders for the manufacture of clothing at this artel can be placed by organizations or by individuals; and as a general rule, the customer supplies his own materials and pays the artel only the established production cost. On orders placed by individuals, the production prices are, for a child's winter coat, 75 roubles,[1] for a woman's winter coat, 275 roubles, and for a man's winter coat, 250 roubles. Men's jackets are manufactured for 85 roubles, and trousers, for 45. Orders placed by organizations or wholesale outlets receive a 20 per cent. reduction on this scale.

The artel is organized on a co-operative profit-sharing basis. Its members are the workers employed in its shops and offices. In addition to their share in the artel's annual income, the member-workers are also paid regular wages for work performed. The monthly earnings of the employees in this artel were said to average 500 roubles. Earnings as high as 2,000 roubles a month were cited for cutters, but the majority of skilled workers earn from 600 to 1,200 roubles montly.

The artel "Novy Put" was first organized in 1928, during the first Five Year Plan. Before the German invasion in 1941, it had a membership of 400 workers, and in addition to the main establishment, it had four branches in various districts of Minsk. The membership, composed largely of Jews, suffered a very high casualty rate during the war; 90 per cent. were said to have perished at the hand of the Germans. In July 1944, shortly after the liberation of Minsk, the artel was reorganized; and it has been steadily growing both in membership and in output. By July 1, 1946, it had 110 workers.

The shoe artels are organized along the same general pattern as the clothing artels. In November 1946 the Red Shoemaker artel in Minsk was turning out a thousand pairs of workers' shoes and three thousand pairs of children's shoes per month.[2] The present membership

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[1] 5.40 roubles equal one U.S. dollar; 21.36 roubles equal one pound sterling.

[2] UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of
474 the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population,,as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical
programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of
drugs and equipment had been shipped. The largest single item of the
742 medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive
in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the
Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study
penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to
aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians
in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed
interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

648 742 Apart from the penicillin plant, other big items in the UNRRA medical programme include electrocardiographs, X-ray machines and film, and artificial limb manufacturing equipment. Drug requirements have involved the procurement of quinine and, as a substitute, atabrine. By the end of January 1947, slightly less than one metric ton of atabrine had been shipped.

743 648 Not the least of UNRRA's contribution to Byelorussian health has been the soap supplies furnished. In 1946 the only soap available in the hospitals and sanitoria (and this means generally the only soap available anywhere), came from UNRRA sources. This was also true of a large part of the diet of patients, which came from UNRRA food supplies; and of blankets and bedding, which were distributed to hospitals and children's homes.

Still among the urgent requirements in Byelorussian hospitals are beds and bedding, laboratory equipment - including more X-ray machines, microscopes, stains and medea, drugs, and lamps - furniture, kitchen equipment, food, and soap.

Agricultural Rehabilitation Supplies

648 241 UNRRA agricultural rehabilitation supplies began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in February 1946 and consisted almost entirely of seeds. At the end of July the Byelorussian Government acknowledged receipt of 5,300 tons of vegetable and other seeds, which were estimated to be sufficient for planting from half a million to 600,000 hectares; and since favourable weather permitted late sowing, less than a thousand tons had to be held over for use in 1947. On all the farms visited by the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, the vegetable, clover, vetch, timothy and other grass crops had been started fron UNRRA seed.

Besides seeds - an important contribution toward increased food supplies - UNRRA has shipped fishing equipment, food processing equipment, and farm machinery - chiefly tractors. Deliveries of the latter, however, were heartbreakingly slow; and it was only in December 1946 that the first 221 UNRRA tractors arrived. The difficulty of procuring tractors has been one of the greatest obstacles to farm recovery in Byelorussia. The Mission estimated that had UNRRA tractors been available before August 1946, grain cultivation and production would have increased by 500 hectares and 500 tons for each tractor delivered.

Altogether, UNRRA plans to furnish over 800 tractors to the B.S.S.R.

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Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies

Shipments of industrial supplies up to January 31, 1947, amounted to 14,495 gross long tons valued at 10,081,000 dollars. Largest items were public utilities equipment (power generators, pipe for gas and water mains, etc.) and raw materials, chemicals and engineering stores. The following table shows the shipments by value as well as by tonnage.

TABLE XIV

UNRRA Shipments of Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies to Byelorussia up to January 31, 1947

	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Transport and telecommunication	206	389
Public utilities	4,215	5,995
Building repair equipment	1,869	1,888
Mining and quarrying equipment	473	600
Machine repair equipment	811	274
Miscellaneous consumer goods	79	25
Materials, chemicals, engineering stores	2,433	5,173
Unclassified	95	151
Totals	10,181	14,495

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

The first of these supplies arrived in Byelorussia during February and March 1946, and consisted of 3,000 tons of metals, tarpaulin, and rubber. A number of small locomotives for use in the peat and lumbering industries also arrived during the early months, as well as nine power stations and some engineering equipment, which were received in the second quarter of 1946. These first power stations have been followed by others; and by the end of October last year, 30 units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been received. Altogether, UNRRA planned to furnish electric generating capacity of 18,000 kilowatts in 65 units, ranging from small 15 kilowatt army surplus generator sets to two 2,500 kilowatt steam power stations.

Protocol Supplies

A large part of the industrial rehabilitation programme for Byelorussia has consisted of so-called "protocol" supplies - that is, certain items of industrial machinery and equipment which the United Kingdom, in a previous trande agreement, had contracted to furnish to the Soviet Union. After UNRRA assumed responsibility in the Ukraine and Byelorussia, negotiations commenced for the transfer of this equipment through UNRRA. About the middle of 1946 it was concluded that UNRRA would take over and deliver these "protocol" supplies as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme for these two Republics. Similarly, UNRRA became financially responsible for these protocol supplies which had already been delivered by the United Kingdom to Byelorussia and the Ukraine.

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By March 1, 1947, protocol supplies already dispatched to the B.S.S.R. amounted to over 3,881,000 dollars, and remaining shipments, to 132,400 dollars. Included in these supplies are power stations, pumps, telephone equipment, cranes and hoists, and electrical equipment.

U.S. Army Surplus Equipment (Surprop)

A second large share of Byelorussia's industrial equipment was acquired by UNRRA from U.S. Army Surpluses (Surprop) in Europe and the United Kingdom. The most important part of the equipment was approximately a million dollars' worth of heavy construction machinery selected from two depots in the United Kingdom, which UNRRA had purchased in their entirety. It was intended to use this equipment in clearing up the rubble and otherwise assisting the reconstruction of Byelorussian cities. The first shipments of surprop supplies for Byelorussia arrived in August 1946, and consisted of 45 two-and-a-half-ton trucks shipped from Marseilles. The government informed the UNRRA Mission that only eight of the 45 trucks were in good operating order; the rest were in very poor condition, and lacked essential parts. Inspection of the trucks by the Mission industrail specialist verified this report.

Inspection of further shipments which arrived in September revealed that they were in no better condition; and because technical manuals and spare parts were lacking, local repairs proved almost impossible. The surprop situation has since been made easier by the procurement of technical manuals from one of the depots in the United Kingdom. Later shipments have been inspected prior to loading, and the procurement of necessary spare parts initiated in the United States.

Distribution of UNRRA Supplies

UNRRA supplies for Byelorussia are handed over to the government at the port of entry, and the government is then responsible for arranging distribution. Like most other countries receiving UNRRA help, the Byelorussian Government has established a special organization to supervise the reception, warehousing, and distribution of all UNRRA goods received. Headed by Mr. Ivan S. Bylinsky, the Administration of UNRRA Supplies works in close liaison with the various Ministries of the Byelorussian Government and with the UNRRA Mission.

Most UNRRA shipments for both the Ukraine and Byelorussia have arrived mainly through the port of Odessa; and since early 1946 an UNRRA officer has been stationed there to handle problems connected with delivery. Before an UNRRA shipment comes in, the authorities at Odessa are notified of the ship's name, its expected time of arrival, and the nature of the cargo. As soon as possible after the ship lands, discharging of cargo begins. Stevedoring labour is supplied by the Port Commander's service organization, Inflot", which also furnishes checkers to work in the ship's hold and on the docks, counting the supplies and reporting any damaged-goods. As the cargo is unloaded, perishable items are placed in warehouses on the docks, and seeds in

648 a warehouse in the suburbs of Odessa. Packaged goods, such as canned meat, army rations, and juices, are piled on the dock at shipside and finally into freight cars.

Directives for the distribution of the supplies are issued by the UNRRA Supplies Administration in accordance with a general plan embracing the whole supply programme. As soon as the government learns of the prospective arrival of the ship, specific directions are given, so that immediately upon the loading of the freight cars, the goods start off to their ultimate destinations.

Many of the items - such as metals and contributed clothing, which require processing or sorting - are concentrated in Minsk before final disposition. Since at present Byelorussia has no facilities for processing certain raw materials, these are sent to factories in other parts of the U.S.S.R. under contracts which provide for the return to Byelorussia of finished products such as transmission cables, trolley wires, babbitt bearings, etc. The same is true with respect to some of the shipments of raw wool, which were sent to mills in Moscow or Ivanov to be woven into cloth.

In every instance, the supplies are distributed to the neediest sections of the Republic, either free of charge, or by sale to ration card holders. UNRRA food supplies, for example, are distributed in four ways: (a) sales to the general public through government ration stores; (b) sales to certain categories of consumers through special outlets, including stores attached to factories for factory workers, and special stores for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and invalids; (c) factory cafeterias where workers may purchase low-cost meals; and (d) free distribution through hospitals, children's homes, and local village soviets in rural areas most heavily devastated by the war.

In 1946 somewhat less than half the UNRRA foodstuffs were distributed free to hospitals, schools, invalids' homes, etc., and the rest was sold through ration stores. UNRRA clothing is sold through retail outlets, or in factory stores; and contributed clothing is distributed free to hospitals, schools, and other priority consumers. Medical supplies are transferred gratis to hospitals and invalids' homes. Industrial and agricultural supplies, if capital equipment, are distributed free to collectives and other organizations; and if consumable supplies, such as metals and other raw materials, are sold. Thus industries buy the raw materials, but receive the use of locomotives and generators free of charge.

In rural localities, food and consumer goods are distributed through the local Salpo (rural consumers' co-operative society). In every rural raion soviet (which may embrace a dozen or more collective farm villages), there is a Salpo distributing agency, the management of which is elected by the local consumer shareholders. In the sections which had suffered greatest destruction, collective farms received UNRRA supplies - mostly seeds and army rations - free through the local Salpo. About half the more than 5,000 tons of UNRRA-supplied seeds were distributed free to Byelorussian farms.

Prices and Wages

434 Detailed information on food rations in Byelorussia is not available, but they are believed to be similar to those in the Ukrainian S.S.R.[1]

435 Prices are controlled by the government and price levels vary with the type of market outlet rather than with the type of commodity. 443 In the government ration stores prices are low. In all the main cities, however, there are also one or two special stores, so called "gastronomes", (which are also government operated); these sell unrationed goods at relatively high prices. Their stock consists in large part of luxury items (such as smoked salmon) but some of their commodities are the same as or comparable to those sold in the ration stores. Individuals may therefore supplement their rations of various commodities by purchases at the gastronomes if they are able and willing to pay the price. While the ration stores sold UNRRA food,[2] the entire stock of the gastronomes comes from Byelorussian or Soviet Union sources.

In addition to these stores, and to the special stores serving factory workers and those supplying extra rations at low prices to war invalids and expectant and nursing mothers, there are public markets in the principal cities. Here country people come to sell the allowed quota of their produce and second-hand goods are bought and sold. Prices resemble those in the gastronomes.

435 The difference in prices between the ration stores and the gastronomes in the summer of 1946 is illustrated in the following table.

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[1] See Operational Analysis Paper No. 39, *Economic Rehabilitation in the Ukraine.*

[2] In the late spring and summer of 1946 the foodstuffs (with the exception of bread and potatoes) sold in these shops was to a very great extent of UNRRA origin. Some estimates gave the UNRRA contribution as 70 per cent. of the turnover, but this figure has not been confirmed by the Byelorussian Government. Later the UNRRA percentage gradually decreased as the supply from Soviet sources increased.

TABLE XV

435 Byelorussia: Prices in Ration Stores and Gastronomes, June 1946
(in roubles)

	Ration stores		Gastronomes	
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price
Cheddar cheese	kilogram	29.50[1]	kilogram	280.00
Sugar, granulated	"	5.00	"	120.00
Evaporated milk	14½ ounce can	2.60[1]	small can	70.00
Canned meat	" " "	17.50[1]	" "	55.00
Tea	100 grams	5.00	100 grams	22.50

[1] UNRRA supplies

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

465 In the same month (June 1946) the UNRRA Mission estimated the
average monthly earnings of a semi-skilled urban worker to be approxim-
435 ately 500 roubles, while the average for skilled workers was some 300
roubles higher. Thus the purchasing power of the average worker in
terms of free market prices was low; a kilogram of cheese would cost
him half a month's earnings. However, many factories operate low-
priced cafeterias and factory workers receive priority for clothing and
housing. Those who exceed their production quota receive further
privileges.

465 The following table gives the average monthly earnings in June 1946 of four Byelorussian factories as reported to UNRRA Mission observers by the factories' managers.

TABLE XVI

465 Average Monthly Earnings in Four Byelorussian Factories, June 1946
(in roubles)

Radio factory, Minsk	
Most skilful workers	1,500
Ordinary workers	800 to 850
Beginners	150 to 200
Match and plywood factory, Borisov	
Honour brigade	700
Average for all workers	500 to 600
Lowest paid workers	200 to 300
Garment factory, Vitebsk	
One cutter, exceptionally skilled	2,000
Cutters	1,200
Most skilful operators	600
Sewing machine operators	200 to 500
Brick factory, Polotsk	
Best workers	400 to 450
All workers	300
Lowest paid workers	250

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

435 In September 1946 a decree of the Government of the U.S.S.R. announced an increase in the price of rationed goods and a reduction in commercial prices (such as those charged in gastronomes). This measure was designed to facilitate the abolition at a later date of the rationing system and the establishment of one unified state price for all goods.

465 In order that the increase of ration prices should not fall too heavily on the lower income groups, workers earning less than 900 roubles a month were simultaneously granted a wage increase on a sliding scale, those earning less receiving a greater increase.[1]

The latest report received lists the following average wages paid in the B.S.S.R.

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[1] Increases were as follows: 110 roubles a month for those earning up to 300 roubles; 100 for those earning up to 500; 90 for those earning up to 700; 80 for those earning up to 900.

TABLE XVII

465

Average Monthly Earnings in Byelorussia, May 1947
(in roubles)

Government minister	3,000
Office manager)	1,200 to 1,500
Shop supervisor)	
Skilled cutter in garment factory	1,200 to 2,000
Chief cook	1,000
Assistant Cook	500
Chauffeur	700 to 800
Civil servant in government office	700 to 800
Skilled machine operator in	
radio factory)	700 to 800
match and plywood factory)	
garment factory)	
co-operative shoe artel)	
co-operative clothing factory)	
Waitress)	350
Charwoman)	
Factory apprentice (beginner)	200

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

657

Proceeds of Sale of UNRRA Supplies

When UNRRA supplies are sold, the Byelorussian Government, in accordance with the terms of the UNRRA agreement, uses the proceeds for further relief and rehabilitation projects within the Republic. From December 1945 to the end of 1946, the net proceeds of sales (after deduction of distribution costs) amounted to 656,658,000 roubles, which were expended for health and welfare services; the rehabilitation of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; industry and utilities; and on social insurance.

V OUTLOOK IN 1947

146 Although there has been no starvation in the B.S.S.R., almost everyone is undernourished. There is still an acute shortage of fats and oils, meat, milk, and sugar. Such of these foods as were available in 1946 were chiefly from UNRRA; and now that UNRRA food shipments have ceased, there will undoubtedly be privation. The shortage of fats and oils will continue until domestic livestock herds are fattened and replenished; in the meantime, only external help will alleviate the scarcity.

262 Much depends on a good harvest this year. Last December the B.S.S.R. Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Krupenya, in a conference with the UNRRA Mission, stressed the importance of increased food production in 1947 - more seeds, more tractors, more farm workers. A part of the interview is reproduced below. Mr. Waller is Chief of the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Mr. Waller: "In our observations we have seen villages where there was such devastation that the people...had to be helped with food this year. Will the same need exist next year?"

Mr. Krupenya: "In some areas it will not be possible to cover the local needs from the produce of the local farms. The population of extremely devastated areas will stand in need of assistance...The government is making plans to assist them."

Mr. Waller: "What per cent. or number of the village people will need assistance?"

Mr. Krupenya: "It is hard to say exactly, but at least ten to fifteen per cent. of the rural population in Byelorussia..."

Mr. Waller: "Will there be starvation (in the B.S.S.R.) if no aid from outside is forthcoming?"

Mr. Krupenya: "Conditions will be difficult, and aid from outside the Republic will be necessary...Every effort will be made to keep the people from starving."

Mr. Waller: "If no other aid is received from outside, and without further UNRRA assistance, will there be any danger of starvation?"

262 Mr. Krupenya: "The need is so great that some aid will be given...by other Soviet Republics. The increased work on restoration planned for next year will impose additional burdens..." He then added: "The situation is hard after the war. The help received from UNRRA has been great, but after such devastation as was inflicted on Byelorussia, one cannot expect to have appreciable results in one or two years. The time is too short. The results of rehabilitation work done now will be felt later. The situation is still grave this year, and especially so in the villages which suffered most. It cannot be said that there will not be malnutrition. Certain people will not have enough food. There will still be people who do not get enough to eat."

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113

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[Constitution as of July, 1947]

CONSTITUTION

(FUNDAMENTAL LAW)

of the

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

of December 25, 1936

As Amended Through July 11, 1947

ПРОЛЕТАРЫ ЎСІХ КРАІН
ПРОЛЕТАРИИ ВСЕХ СТРАН
БССР

April 1950 50¢
American Russian Institute
58 Park Avenue New York 16, New York

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[Constitution as of July, 1947]

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CONSTITUTION
(Fundamental Law)

of the

BYELORUSSIAN
(BELORUSSIAN)

SOVIET SOCIALIST

REPUBLIC

of December 23, 1936

As amended through July 11, 1947

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Byelorussian SSR Errata 7, 7, 8 "Personal" not "Private".
(43a - Art. 43a)
43a, before "Ministries" insert "Republican and Union-Republican";
delete "economic and cultural". 120, after "BSSR" should be "below".

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CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE BELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The Soviets of Working People's deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists, the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the liberation of the Belorussian people from national oppression by tsarism and by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Belorussian nationalist counter-revolution, constitute the political foundation of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Art. 3. In the Belorussian SSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the Belorussian SSR.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Belorussian SSR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people) or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a co-operative association).

475 421 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large State-organized agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, belong to the whole people.

421 474 Art. 7. The common enterprise of collective farms and co-operative organizations, with their live stock and implements, and the products of the collective farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organizations.

[472] In addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its ~~private~~ personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its ~~private~~ personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling house, live stock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

423 474 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

472 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the Belorussian SSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household

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421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

185 471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Belorussian SSR is determined and directed by the State national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of strengthening the Belorussian SSR, and of consolidating the independence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Belorussian SSR work is a duty and matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Belorussian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

631 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

Art. 14. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Moghilev, Molodechno, Pinsk, Polessye and Polotsk Regions.

642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

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642 Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican
[701] military formations.

Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange
[644] diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

[641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;

b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;

c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;

d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;

e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;

f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;

g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;

h) Direction of insurance and savings;

i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organisations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;

j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;

k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;

l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernisation of cities and other inhabited places;

m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;

n) Labour legislation;

o) Direction of social maintenance;

p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education;

q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of all-Republican importance;

r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;

s) Direction and organisation of physical culture and sports;

t) Organisation of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;

u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;

v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

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642 the Belorussian SSR;

w) Establishment of the representation of the Belorussian SSR in international relations;

x) Organisation of the military formations of the Belorussian SSR;

y) Legislation concerning marriage and the family.

Chapter III. The Higher Organs of State Power in the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

646 Art. 20. The highest organ of state power in the Belorussian SSR is the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 21. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is elected for a term of four years by the citizens of the Belorussian SSR voting by election districts on the basis of one deputy for every 20,000 of the population.

Art. 22. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR exercises all rights vested in the Belorussian SSR in accordance with Article 13 and 19 of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR, insofar as they do not, by virtue of the Constitution, come within the jurisdiction of organs of the Belorussian SSR that are accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, that is, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, and the Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 23. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is the sole legislative organ of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 24. A law is considered adopted if passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR by a simple majority vote.

Art. 25. Laws passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR are published in the Belorussian and Russian languages over the signatures of the President and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 26. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Chairman of the Supreme Soviet and four Vice-Chairmen.

Art. 27. The Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR presides at the sittings of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and has charge of the conduct of its business and proceedings.

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646 Art. 28. Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR twice a year.

Extraordinary sessions are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR at its discretion or on the demand of one-third of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 29. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, consisting of a President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary of the Presidium and fifteen members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 30. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for all its activities.

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643 Art. 31. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR:

a) Convenes the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR;

b) Gives interpretation of laws; issues decrees;

c) Gives interpretations of the laws of the Belorussian SSR in operation;

d) Conducts nation-wide polls (referendums);

[645] e) Annuls decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and likewise decisions and orders of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies if they do not conform to law;

f) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, releases and appoints Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, subject to subsequent confirmation by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR;

g) Grants the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;

h) Confers titles of honour of the Belorussian SSR and grants awards;

i) Exercises the right of pardoning citizens convicted by judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;

j) Appoints and recalls diplomatic representatives of the Belorussian SSR to foreign states;

k) Receives the letters of credence and recall of diplomatic representatives accredited to it by foreign states.

646 Art. 32. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Credentials Committee to verify the credentials of the members of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

On the report of the Credentials Committee, the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR decides whether to recognize the credentials of deputies or to annul their election.

Art. 33. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, when it deems necessary, appoints commissions of investigation and audit on any matter.

It is the duty of all institutions and officials to comply with the demands of such commissions and to submit to them all necessary materials and documents.

Art. 34. A member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR may not be prosecuted or arrested without the consent of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, or, when the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is not in session, without the consent of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

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646 Art. 35. On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR orders new elections to be held within a period not exceeding two months from the date of expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 36. On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR retains its powers until the newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR shall have formed a new Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 37. The newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR not later than three months after the elections.

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[646] 645 Art. 38. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR appoints the Government of the Belorussian SSR, namely, the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter IV. The Organs of State Administration of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

Art. 39. The highest executive and administrative organ of state power of the Belorussian SSR is the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 40. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR is responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, or, in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 41 The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR, and of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and verifies their execution.

Art. 42. Decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR are binding throughout the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 43. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR:

a) Coordinates and directs the work of the[1] Ministries of the Belorussian SSR and of other economic and cultural[2] institutions under its jurisdiction; coordinates and verifies the work of the authorized representatives of the all-Union Ministries;

b) Prepares the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR, presents it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for confirmation and adopts measures for its execution;

c) Prepares the state budget of the Belorussian SSR, presents it for confirmation to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and adopts measures for its execution;

d) Adopts measures for the maintenance of public order, for the protection of the interests of the state, and for the safeguarding of the rights of citizens;

e) Directs and verifies the work of the Executive Committees of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies;

f) Sets up, whenever necessary, special Committees and Central Administrations under the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR for economic and cultural affairs;

g) Exercises guidance in the sphere of the relations of the Belorussian SSR with foreign states, on the basis of the general procedure established by the USSR governing the relations of Union Republics with foreign states;

h) Directs the organization of the military formations of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 44. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul decisions and orders of Executive Committees of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and likewise to suspend decisions and orders of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul orders and instructions of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

[1] [Errata: should read "Republican and Union Republican Ministries" --- Analyst]

[2] [Errata: "economic and cultural" should be deleted --- Anal

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl
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645 Art. 45. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and consists of:

The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Chairman of the State Planning Commission of the Belorussian SSR;
The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Chief of the Arts Administration;
The Chairman of the Committee on Cultural and Educational Institutions.

Art. 46. The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 47. The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, within the limits of the jurisdiction of their respective Ministries, issue orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR, of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and of the orders and instructions of the Union-Republican Ministries of the USSR, and verify their execution.

Art. 48. The Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are either Union-Republican or Republican Ministries.

The following Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are Union-Republican Ministries of the Belorussian SSR:

The Ministry of Internal Affairs
The Ministry of State Control
The Ministry of State Security
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Ministry of the Armed Forces
The Ministry of Cinematography
The Ministry of Light Industry
The Ministry of Forestry
The Ministry of the Timber and Paper Industry
The Ministry of the Meat and Dairy Industry
The Ministry of Public Health
The Ministry of the Building Materials Industry
The Ministry of the Food Industry
The Ministry of State Farms
The Ministry of Agriculture
The Ministry of Trade
The Ministry of Finance
The Ministry of Justice.

The following Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are Republican Ministries:

The Ministry of Social Maintenance
The Ministry of the Housing Construction Industry
The Ministry of Motor Transport
The Ministry of Furniture and Carpentry Industries
The Ministry of the Municipal Economy
The Ministry of Local Industry
The Ministry of the Local Fuel Industry
The Ministry of Education.

Art. 49. Each Union-Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration of the Belorussian SSR entrusted to it, with the exception of only a limited number of enterprises, according to a list confirmed

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645 by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and is subordinate both to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and the corresponding Union-Republican Ministry of the USSR.

Art. 50. Each Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it and is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 51. The Government of the Belorussian SSR or a Minister of the Belorussian SSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR within a period not exceeding three days.

Chapter V. The Local Organs of State Power

631 Art. 52. The organs of state power in regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 53. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are elected by the working people of the respective regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages for a term of two years.

Art. 54. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages direct cultural, political and economic affairs on their territory, draw up the local budgets, direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, assist in strengthening the defensive capacity of the country and ensure the observance of the laws and the protection of the rights of citizens.

Art. 55. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 56. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village is the Executive Committee elected by it, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary and members.

[623] Art. 57. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies in a small locality is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by the Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 58. The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village exercises guidance in cultural, political and economic affairs within its territory on the basis of decisions taken by the corresponding Soviet of Working People's Deputies and superior state organs.

Art. 59. Sessions of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than three times a year.

Sessions of district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than four times a year.

Art. 60. Sessions of Soviets of Working People's Deputies of cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are convened by their respective executive organs not less than once a month.

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631 Art. 61. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities or districts in big cities each elect a Chairman and a Secretary for the duration of their sessions to conduct the sittings of the sessions.

[623] Art. 62. The Chairman of a settlement or village Soviet convenes the Soviet and conducts its sittings.

Art. 63. The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organs of the respective superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 64. The superior Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Executive Committees and to suspend decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 65. The superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies and of their Executive Committees.

634 Art. 66. The regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments and Administrations of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Agriculture
a Department of Finance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Local Industry
a Department of Municipal Economy
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Motor Transport
a Department of Local Fuel Industry
a Department of Roads
a General Department
a Department of Arts
a Department of Village and Kolkhos Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the Region, the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the Union-Republican Ministries of Light Industry, Food Industry, Timber Industry and State Farms:

a Department of Light Industry
a Department of Food Industry
a Department of Timber Industry
a Department of State Farms.

[625] Art. 67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Union set up their own administrations under the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies, in accordance with the conditions of the region and on the basis of the laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

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634 Art. 68. The Departments and Administrations of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the corresponding regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

632 Art. 69. The district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Roads
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Agriculture
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairmen of the Executive Committees and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the district, the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the respective regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies:

a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Local Industry.

Art. 70. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Security set up their Departments under the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies in accordance with the conditions of the district, on the basis of the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR and subject to confirmation by the corresponding regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 71. The Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

633 Art. 72. The city Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Public Health
a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Public Education
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the city's industry and its municipal and suburban economy,

a Department of Local Industry and
a Department of Agriculture.

Art. 73. The Departments of the city Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the respective city Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding

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633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mozyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the City Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

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646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

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631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

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692 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

Art. 91. District and city procurators are appointed by the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

Art. 92. The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

461 641 Art. 93. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 94. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of an eight-hour working day for factory and office workers, the reduction of the working day to seven or six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where working conditions are particularly arduous, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest-homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

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644 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[257] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

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641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organisational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organizations,

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575 641 sport and defense organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organisations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[687] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies — of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies — are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

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666 [64] Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR who has reached the age of 21, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualification, social origin, property status or past activities, has the right to be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

[512] Art. 112. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 113. Citizens serving in the armed forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 114. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

Art. 115. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 116. Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

Art. 117. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time upon a decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 118. Elections of deputies to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR are held by election districts on the following basis:

in elections to regional Soviets - one deputy for every 10,000 to 15,000 of the population, depending upon its size;

in elections to district Soviets - one deputy for every 1,000 of the population; in a district whose population does not exceed 25,000, twenty-five deputies are elected, and in a district whose population exceeds 60,000, not more than sixty deputies are elected;

in elections to city Soviets or city district Soviets - one deputy for every 350 to 1,000 of the population, depending upon its size; in a city or city district whose population does not exceed 12,000, thirty-five deputies are elected;

in elections to village or settlement Soviets - one deputy for every 100 of the population; in a village or settlement whose population does not exceed 1,000, nine deputies are elected, and where the population exceeds 2,500, not more than twenty-five deputies.

The basis of representation for each regional, district, city, village and settlement Soviet of Working People's Deputies is fixed in the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Regional, District, City, Village and Settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR, within the range of the bases of representation indicated in the present article.

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Chapter X. Arms, Flag, Capital

186 Art. 119. The arms of the Belorussian SSR are a sickle and hammer, against the rays of the rising sun, and surrounded by ears of rye, intertwined on the left with clover and on the right, with flax; below, between the two sheaves is a part of the globe. Both sheaves are intertwined with a red band inscribed with "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the Belorussian and Russian languages and, below, with the initials "BSSR". Above the arms is a five-pointed star.

Art. 120 . The state flag of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a red cloth, with a gold sickle and hammer and a red, gold-bordered, five-pointed star above, and the gold letters "BSSR" above[1] in the upper corner, near the staff.

Art. 121. The Capital of the Belorussian SSR is the City of Minsk.

Chapter XI. Procedure for Amending the Constitution

642 Art. 122. The Constitution of the Belorussian SSR may be amended only by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR adopted by a majority not less than two-thirds of the votes of the Supreme Soviet.

Note: "Byelroussia" is now the correct spelling in English as accepted by the Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names of the United Nations.

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000 This English translation was made from a Russian text published by the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1947.

[1] [Errata: should read "below" -- Analyst]

113, 642 Belorussia RCl

[For comparisons of the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as amended through July 11, 1947, with other constitutions of the Sixteen Constituent Republics of the USSR, see 70: American Russian Institute, Rl Soviet Union, category 116.]

9: American Russian Institute RCl Belorussia RCl
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[For the complete text of the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as amended through July 11, 1947, see cat. 116, entire source.]

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

THE NAME "WHITE RUSSIA"[1]

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR

103 THE TERM Belorussia[2] is not well known outside the Slavic world. The area is more frequently referred to as "White Russia." Since 1917, however, use of the latter term has become a source of confusion. The Russians who fought against the Reds in the Civil War of 1918–20 were also called "White Russians." Although in Russian the term *Belorussy*, the ethnic group, and *Belye Russkie*, the political group, are easily distinguishable, there is no way of making the distinction clear in literal translation into English. Many people still cannot understand how an anti-Soviet group succeeded in organizing a republic within the Soviet Union, and why its members are called "white" after they have turned "red." In view of the general confusion, it is perhaps time to suggest that when referring to the ethnic group, the term Belorussian replace the term "White Russian" in our libraries, documents and literature.

The question is: When and why were these lands and people first called "white"?

There is no written evidence that the term White Russia (*Belaja Rus'*, *Alba Russia*) was used before 1382 (Karamzin). At that time, and probably some time before, it was known among the Poles, Livonians, Prussians, and perhaps other Germans (Lamanskij). It designated at least part, if not the whole, of present Belorussia which was at that time a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The origin and meaning of the word "white" as applied to this particular part of the country have been the subject of considerable [291] dispute. Some historians believe the term to have originated from the white clothing, smock, leggings, and homespun overcoat, which the people of this region have worn since time immemorial (Herberstein, Leroy-Beaulieu). Others attribute it to the deep snow which covers the country from October to April, and suggest that the people wore white clothes "because their country was called white" (Tatiščev). [142] Still others find the explanation in the light complexions of the people: fair skin, blond hair, and pale blue eyes (Karskij). The theory which connects the name with the white clothing of the people has apparently been officially adopted in the B. S. S. R. At least Kuzma

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[1] The research basic to this paper was partially supported by a grant from the Russian Research Center of Harvard University.

[2] The spelling *Byelorussia* is preferred by some translators of Soviet literature into English. The author, however, feels that the spelling *Belorussia* is adequate. The use of *y* as a vowel softener in the middle of a word is more likely to confuse the English speaking reader than to aid in pronunciation.

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103 Kiselev, chairman of the Belorussian delegation to the United Nations, explained the term "White Russia" as having arisen "because of the national costume of the Belorussians" (Associated Press, May 24, 1946). Simple theories are tempting. As a small part of the country was called Black Russia, some ethnographers also have assumed that this name was given to it because its inhabitants "used to wear black caps and black coats" (Zograf).

One could perhaps accept these theories if the terms White Croat and White and Black Huns were not used long before the term White Russian.[3] As neither natural scenery nor clothing and complexion could have accounted for these names, some other explanation must be sought.

The term "black" has been explained by the fact that, according to the Chinese tradition, black was the color of the north. This concept is apparently common to most of the steppe people throughout the continent, and has been the origin of the terms Black Bulgars, Black Huns, Black Ugrians, and so on (Vernadsky). No evidence, however, has ever been presented to show that people were called "white" because of their geographical position. Even if such evidence did exist, it could not possibly explain the origin of White Russia.
103 Moreover, by the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the six-
175 teenth century, the Poles and Lithuanians used to call Muscovite Russia "white," and Belorussia "black": "*Ruś pod kniaziem Moskiewskim Białą Rusią nazwano, a tę, która do Polski należała—Czarną*" (Russia under the Prince of Moscow is called White Russia and that which belonged to Poland is called Black).[4] The Novgorodian chronicler of the fifteenth century describes the Byzantine emperor John Paleologue as having said that "the highest form of Christianity is in White Russia where my brother Vasilij Vasilevič (of Moscow) is the king; eastern monarchs obey him and princes serve him with their lands."[5] Latin documents describe Ivan III of Moscow as *Ioannes, dux albae Russiae* (1472). Tred'jakovskij saw White Russia as located on both banks of the Dnieper, with "Smolensk as its capital." The picture is further confused in the seventeenth century when the term "White Russia" also included the Ukrainian lands of Kiev and Volyn (Potebnja).

103 Besides White Russia, a Red Russia, *Červonaja Rus'*, had been known long before the Reds appeared in Russia. It is present Galicia or Western Ukraine. The name has been explained as deriving from

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[3] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, I; English translation by S. H. Cross, *The Primary Russian Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), pp. 138, 140–41.

[4] Quoted from A. Potebnja, p. 119; see *infra*, Bibliographical Note.

[5] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, VI, 152–53; Appendix XIX, p. 117.

the people's habit of wearing red clothes; they used a dye which they called *červec*. A. Potebnja pointed out, however, that the use of *červec* had been common to all the Ukraine, not only to Galicia. He suggested that the name of the country may have come from the city of Červen, first mentioned in the Chronicle under the year 981. Červen apparently was an important political and economic center of the time, for several settlements along the Bug River were known as the Červenian cities, *gorody červen'scii*. Later, it would seem, the name applied to the whole region. This theory gave G. Il'inskij the idea that the name White Russia might have similar origins. Indeed, a town of Belsk near the ethnic East Slavic border dates from the thirteenth century (1253); it is situated between the rivers Belaja and Beljanka, and is surrounded in the north, east and south by the towns of Białystok, Beloveža and Bela respectively. As the nearby cities gravitating to Červen were named "Červenian," so "it would seem quite possible" that the towns around Belsk "were known as the Belskan cities (*gorody bel'scii*)," and that the name was later extended "to the whole country east of the city." Thus, according to Il'inskij, the term "red" (*červony*) came to designate the Russian people in the Polish, and the term "white" (*bely*) in the Lithuanian "spheres of influence."

The analogy is superficial and not warranted by a bit of historical evidence. Contrary to *gorody červen'scii* known to the Chronicle, no mention of *gorody bel'scii* is found in any document ancient or modern. Neither do we find any reference to Belsk, at one time the possession of the Galič-Volynian princes, as a political and economic center of any importance toward which other cities may have gravitated. G. Il'inskij leaves the term Black Russia without explanation (for no city with the name formed with the radical *čern-* has been known in that region), and no light is thrown upon the question why the Croats and the Serbs, and later Muscovy, were also called "white." Moreover, the analogy is based on a theory which itself is questionable. The adjectives *červenskij* and *červonyj* represent semantic differentiations which exclude substitution of one for another. The same, of course, is true of *belskij* and *belyj*. How such a substitution could have occurred, if it did, in the case of "Červonaja Rus'," A. Potebnja did not care to explain.[6]

[6] Cf. V. Vinogradov, *Russkij jazyk. Grammatičeskoe učenie o slove* (Moscow, 1947), pp. 221–31, and R. Smal-Stocki, *Abris des Ukrainischen Substantivebildung* (Vienna, 1915), p. 28; also his *Značinnja ukraïns'kych prykmetnykiv* (Warsaw, 1926), pp. 66, 74, and 81. We do not know when the name Červonaja Rus' first appeared (Lamanskij). We find it on a map by Fra Mauro (1459–70) translated as *Russia rossa*, and one may suppose that the term was known for some time before. It has been suggested that the country was called *rossa* because of the red hair of its inhabitants (Ripley) and by strangers who used the same term for the color red and the color brown (cf. J. Furrel, *The Nine-*

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103 The origins of the term "White Russia" have also been sought in the religious background of the Slavic peoples. Supporters of this theory remind us that Constantine Porphyrogenitus used the term "white" in order to distinguish the baptized Croats and Serbs from those who remained pagan (Svencicki). But this distinction could not hold for the Belorussians, since all the Slavic tribes from Kiev to Novgorod were Christians in the fourteenth century when the name White Russia first appeared in documents.[7]

Discouraged by the historical evidence, one may seek refuge in the darkness of prehistoric times. According to certain writers, the Russian word for "white" (*belyj*) was derived from the name of an obscure Slavic deity *BELbog*, *BEL-gorjuč-kamen'* (otherwise: *alatyr'*, [794] *aladyr'*, "magic stone").[8] Some traces of the ancient cult of Belbog are indeed found among the Western Slavs. Although little is known about the cult, one can deduce that Belbog was the opposite of Černobog, god of evil. Hence the association of the adjective *belyj* with anything good, pure, light and bright. The Slavic proper name Beloslav, though rare, supposedly expressed the same idea (Miklosich). Some writers have seen a relation between Belbog and Belun, a mythical character in Ukrainian and Belorussian folklore, personifying good fortune (Afanas'ev, Dahl).[9] It is only a step further to the proposition that the country was called "white" because its people worshipped a "white god."

The theory found no supporters at the time it was formulated (1826), but it was revived a century later by a group of Belorussian political exiles in Lithuania (1923). Impressed by the apparent

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teenth Century, XVII (1885), 321–30.) The name *červonaja* may thus have appeared as a Polish or Ukrainian translation from Latin. Indeed, the color symbolism may have nothing to do with it. In 1918–20, the peasant guerillas fighting both the Reds and the Whites and living in the woods, were often called *Zelënaja Rus'*. Cf. "*kondovaja, izbjanaja* Rus' " (A. Blok), "*sermjažnaja* Rus' " (N. Nekrasov), "*brodjačaja* Rus'," "*svjataja* Rus'," etc.

[7] At the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, "enigmatic northern Croatia . . . reappeared, after a long eclipse, as a young and vigorous pagan State." From the context of Chapter XXXI it appears that Constantine used the term "white" to stress the political independence of those Croats who "have remained without baptism to our day." Cf. Henri Grégoire, "L'origine et le nom des Croates et des Serbes," *Byzantion*, XVII (1944–45), p. 96.

[8] M. Makarov, "Neskol'ko slov osobennykh, upotrebljaemykh v raznykh oblastjakh Rossii," *Vestnik Evropy* XXI–XXII (1826), 143–48.

[9] Association of the color white with good fortune was also not unknown in the West. Among the different meanings of "white," Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* lists: (now rare) "fortunate," "auspicious." Cf. F. Portal, *Des couleurs symboliques dans l'antiquité, le moyen-âge et les temps modernes* (Paris, 1837); K. E. Goetz, "Weiss und Schwarz bei den Römern," *Festschrift zum 25 jährigen Stiftungsfest des hist.-philol. Ver., Universität München* (Munich, 1905), pp. 63–73; more relevent though contradictory data in F. B. Gummere, "On the Symbolic Use of the Colors Black and White in Germanic Tradition," *Haverford College Studies*, I (1889), 112–62.

similarity between Belbog of Slavic and Bäldäg of Teutonic mythology, they suggested that the Belorussians might be really Balts, and not Slavs at all: *Bělbog*—White God; *Bäldäg*—White Day; *Balts*—the Whites; *Mare Balticum*—White Sea; Belorussians—White Russians—*Baltic* Russians.[10] Indeed, if Belorussia and the Baltic are called "white" for the same reason, albeit in different languages, they must belong together. Mythology and linguistics do not always yield to political purposes. The attempt to separate the Belorussians from the Slavic family did not develop further, and was for some time abandoned.

In 1948, however, the idea reappeared in a periodical published by Belorussian emigrants in the American Zone of Germany. An [181] editorial concedes that the Belorussians "borrowed" many important characteristics, both positive and negative, from the Slavs, but urges "not to close our eyes to the fact that the most valuable characteristics of our national psychology are of Baltic origins, such as general reliability, steadiness, tenacity, dynamism, strong resistance to pressure, mental reserve, etc. We must stress our *baltism*, and not only our slavism." The editorial ends by suggesting a "Federation of Baltic peoples," composed of *Belorussia*, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.[11] One can see how a linguistic, though dilettante, interpretation of a name might possibly alter the political map.

Another explanation of the term "White Russia" has been seen in the fact that *běla*, *běl'* were words used for money, perhaps because of the white color of silver. Only scant evidence of this exists before the fifteenth century, when we first find that in Novgorod, 1 bela=1 kuna. The Primary Chronicle mentions *běla*, *běl'* very vaguely. But it appears more frequently in the Lithuanian chronicles (*metriki*), and in documents concerning the Western Dvina region, i.e. the territory more or less connected with present Belorussia.[12] Adjectives often appear as second derivations of a radical which has lost its original meaning, or acquired a special meaning in addition to the original: cf. *zelënyj* (green); *zelen'* (green paint, vegetation); *zelënyj gorod*, *zelënyj šum*, *molodo da zeleno* (garden city, rustle of leaves in a forest, young and immature). A sequence: *belyj* (white)—*bel'* (whiteness, silver, coin)—*belyj* (wealthy, rich) would be quite possible; and *belaja Rus'* would mean "the rich, wealthy part of Russia" which would be historically correct for the era in question.

Unfortunately, there are also serious objections to this interpretation. One fails to see how this theory could possibly explain the term "white" as applied to Croats, Huns and Ugrians and, in particular, the term "black" as opposed to "white." Moreover, philologists connect *běla* with Old Slavic *obl*, "round, whole, full," rather than with *belyj*, "white" (*bel'*, *ob'l*, *obel'*, *ob'*(*e*)*l'nyi*; cf. Croat: *obal*; Pol.: *obel zupełnie*; Lith.: *ablenas*). Accordingly, *běla*, *běl'* would designate "the full amount" of goods paid in tribute and not "money," and *obel'*, *obel'ny*, "acquired or received in full ownership."[13] Although the latter may have been the case when "full rights of property" were acquired with "money," we do not find "white" or any other derivative of the radical *-běl-* with the meaning "wealthy, rich" in earlier or in later documents; nor is "black" used with the meaning "poor."

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[10] *Kryvič* (Kaunas, 1923), IV, 30. Cf. Lith. *báltas; balù, bálti*, "to appear white."
[11] *Bac'kaŭščyna* (Oberhofer, Germany), II, No. 4 (7) (Feb. 15, 1948), 1. Italics mine.
[12] *Belorusskij Arkhiv*, II, 18, 50.

It is significant that the terms "white" and "black" in connection with present Belorussia did not appear in literature before the fourteenth century, at which time a large part of the Slavic East was conquered by the Tatars. We know that the Asian hordes consisted of three social groups, the "black," the "white," and the "wild" (Vernadsky). The "white" were the ruling clans, the "black" their dependants, and the "wild" presumably represented the heterogeneous and fluid elements that followed the hordes (Vladimircev). The Mongol possessions were divided into "white lands," i.e. those free from duties and services, and "black lands," or those under tribute (Khlebnikov). With this meaning, the expressions "white" and "black" passed from the Orient to the Slavs, and became embedded in their speech.[14]

[13] A. Vostokov, *Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (1858–61), VI, 25; I. Sreznevskij, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka* (St. Petersburg, 1893–1912), I, 217; E. Karskij, *Russkaja Pravda po drevnejšemu spisku* (Leningrad, 1930), pp. 101, 110.

[14] Cf. Chinese: *li*, *li-min*, *li-yüan*, *li-shu*—black, common people,* the masses, the Chinese people; *pai*, *pai-ku*—white, of white bone, of noble birth. Mong.: *χara*—black; *χara ulus*—common folk*, the masses; *χara kümün*—a common man, poor man, tramp; *qaraču*, *qaračud*—lower classes*; *χaralig*, *χarču*, *χaraču*—common folk, the masses*; *χara üge*—common speech, vernacular; *χara šašin*—black faith, shamanism; *χara jasutai*—of black bone, of humble origin; *čaγān jasutai*—of white bone, of noble origin; *caγan albatu*—white folk, freemen, upper classes; *caγan qaγan*, Manch. *cagan han*—the White Tsar, Russian tsar.

Turkic: *qara*—black, common, of lower classes; *qara halq* (Kas. Dsch.)—common folk*; *qara süöq* (Kir.)—black bone, of humble origin; *qara purt* (Kir.)—common folk*; *qara qul*—common workmen, people; *aq*—white; *aq saqal*—an elder, "Stadtältester"; *aq süöq*—(Kir.) white bone, gentry, nobility; *aq süöqtü*—noble; *aq patsa* (Kir.), *aq patša*—Russian tsar; etc.—cf. also numerous toponymics formed with the word *aq* (white): Aq-Taš, Aq-qaja, Aq-qöi, Aq-mähär, Aq-qöprü, Aq-ova, Aq-abad, Aq-jazy, etc.

*Invariably translated *čern'* in O. Kovalevskij, *Mongol'sko-russko-francuzskij slovar'* (Kazan, 1846), II, 893; III, 2275; K. Golstunskij, *Mongol'sko-russkij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1895), III, 327; D'Ohsson, *Histoire des Mongols depuis Tchingis-Khan jusqu'à Timour Beg ou Tamerlan* (La Haye, 1834–35); B. Vladimircev, *Obščestvennyj stroj*

In the Slavic East and Byzantium, the expression was known before the Tatar invasion. We have already mentioned White and Black Croats, Huns, Ugrians, Bulgars, Serbs etc., as described by Greek and Russian chroniclers. The Khazars also used the term, and in the same sense. Šarkel, "white house," or "white hostel," was the name given to the residence of the Khazar governor on the Don. Prince Vladimir (990–1015) founded *Belgorod* as a residence for his three hundred concubines who, due to their social status, were not subject to taxation. A number of "white" outposts and towns such as *Belev, Belyj, Beloe, Bel'sk, Belostok, Beleck, Beljany, Beloveža* and others, founded at this time and later, began their history as settlements exempt from duties or tribute.

The charter (*jarlyk*) by which the Khans delegated their power to the Russian princes, was called *bel'čg*' (D'jačenko; cf. Vostokov, Miklosich). In the fourteenth century, white eagle, first mentioned in 1230, and white horse (*pahonja*) became symbols of independent Poland and independent Lithuania respectively.[15] Prince Vasilij Dmitrievič of Moscow divided his subjects into the *dan'ščiki*, i.e. those who paid tribute, and *bêl'ščiki*, who were exempt (1392). Afanasij Nikitin, an early Russian traveler, reported that in India all kinds of merchandise were imported *bělo*, "without duties": *vse tovar bělo na beserm'n'skuju zemlju* (1466–72). In the Muscovite State, the word *obelit'*, "to whiten," became a technical term for exemption, and *belaja gramota*, "white charter," was a document legalizing the act of such exemption. Citizens free from taxes and services were distinguished as *belomestcy*, and free peasants as *belosošniki*, or *belopašcy*: cf. *I dade ej Boris belomestnuju gramotu* (And Boris gave her a white resident charter); *Prodal esmi . . . dvor svoj . . . na belom meste ne tjaglom* (I sold . . . my property . . . [located] on a white land exempt from duties.)[16] Non-settled lands owned by

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mongolov (Leningrad, 1934), pp. 118, 168; B. Vladimircev, *Sravnitel'naja grammatika mongol'skogo pis'mennogo jazyka i khalkarskogo narečija* (Leningrad, 1929), p. 325; Radlov, *Opyt slovarja tjurkskikh narečij* (St. Petersburg, 1893), I, 86–96; II, 132–61.

[15] The white horse has a long pedigree of honor and good luck. It was worshipped among Medes and Persians (cf. the worship of the black bull in Egypt) and also by the old Prussians and German barbarians. Slavic tribes in the west offered a white horse to Svjatovit, god of light; a black horse to Triglav, the evil power. Presents of white horses made to kings and princes had been an old custom in both East and West. Odin rides the white horse. At the feast of St. George in Bavaria, the saint rides a horse of purest white, and is followed by six angels (boys) also on white horses. The white horse is a powerful symbol in Berkshire, Wiltshire, Kent, etc.

[16] *Belopašcy* were peasants granted exemption from personal duties for having performed outstanding services to the state. The term appeared at the beginning of the seventeenth century, but was abandoned a few decades later. Among others so favored were the descendants of Ivan Susanin, who gave his life for the Tsar Mikhail Romanov (1613). They were *obeleny* in 1619, and were nicknamed *beljane* by the peasantry who did not share this privilege.

Novgorod and Moscow were called *belovod'e*.[17] Lands exempt from tribute, and particularly Church estates, were known as *belye zemli*, and the clergy exempt from personal taxation were called *beloe*, *beleckoe*, *obelennoe*. By extension, men and women living in monasteries before entering the orders, i.e. before giving themselves "in slavery to God," were distinguished as *belec* and *belica*. On the other hand, monks and nuns were known as *černecy*, "black clergy," and wore black gowns and hoods, for they were not free before God in the same sense. Lands under state or city dues and taxes were called *černye*, *černosošnye zemli*, "black lands," and lower classes under personal taxation and services of various kinds were known as "black people": *čern'*, *černoslobodcy*, *černosošniki*.

In general, Russian comprehensive dictionaries agree that *belyj* was the Old Russian "legal term" for those who did not pay taxes or tribute, and *černyj* for "those who bore the whole burden of state taxes and services." Herberstein thought that Ivan IV was called *White Tsar* by the Orientals because he wore a white cap (*belyj klobuk*), in contrast to the black headgear of Asian monarchs. But the whole land of Muscovy already was known as "white" by the time of Ivan III, the monarch who freed it from the Tatar yoke.

In addition to its technical usage, the term *belyj* assumed a figurative meaning in common speech and literature. We often find it as a synonym of "free" in a general sense, *vol'nyj*; and later as a synonym of "noble." Beginning with the sixteenth century, Russian people called their tsar, their religion and country, *belyj* (Dahl). *Belyj svet*, *belsvet* meant "freedom wherever you go" (*svoboda na vse četyre storony*), "the whole earth and mankind" (Dahl). *Belyj* is associated with the idea of purity, moral cleanliness, or lofty ideals. Still more often, the association is with special privilege, neatness, idleness and, somewhat ironically, with "blue blood." The best part of the house is called *belaja polovina*, "white part (half)." *Belobiletnik* is the man with a "white ticket," i.e. exempt from military service. *Beloturka*, "noble grain," is the highest quality of wheat; *belošvejka*, a seamstress able to make very fine clothes; *beloručka*, *beljak*, a man incapable of any kind of manual work, "free to do nothing," a sluggard, a snob.

Most common are expressions *belaja kost'*, "white bone," for people of noble descent, and *černaja kost'*, "black bone," for those of humble origins. One can read of "people of white and black bone" (L. Tolstoy), "black bone students" (Miljukov), and so on. A story prepared by the Soviet officials for use in Berlin schools, and vetoed by American authorities, related the triumph of "the *blackboned*

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[17] The southeastern part of Tomsk province along the Chinese border was described by the same term (*Belovodie*) as late as the nineteenth century. Cf. *Opyt oblastnogo velikorusskogo slovarja* (St. Petersburg, 1852), p. 19.

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proletariat over the worthless *whiteboned* bourgeoisie."[18] *White bone,* meaning "free status, noble origin, upper class," is still a current idiom in Central Asia, presumably the country of its origins. Finally, the expression was given respectability by the Ušakov Dictionary, which defines it in the following terms: "(ironic.) noble, 'lordly' breed."[19]

The West Russian princes, allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, did not pay tribute to the Tatars, and this was the reason why their country was called white (Dragomanov). Indeed, it is believed that the name "white" was "first given by the Poles to all the Lithuanian possessions torn from the Muscovites" and thus "rescued from the Tatar yoke" (Larned).

The theory is very plausible. But as it stands it does not explain why the western part of White Russia, i.e. the farthest removed from the Tatars, was called "black." Lamanskij observed that lands and people were as overloaded with taxes and services in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania as they were in Muscovy, and therefore "white, to them could mean anything but free." Moreover, we know that after the Tatars were defeated in the east, the whole of White Russia became "black" at least from the point of view of the Poles (Potebnja).

The contradictions, however, disappear when the situation is

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[18] Italics mine. The story was entitled "How Lenin and the Tsar Divided the Russian People Between Themselves" (Associated Press, Dec. 1, 1946).

[19] D. Ušakov, and others. *Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1934–41), I, 122. This usage was perhaps responsible for the fact that political terms such as "white army," "white guards," "white emigrants," "white rabble," "white idea," "white front" (*belogvardejcy, beloemigranty, belaja svoloč', belaja ideja, belaja mečta*) and the like, have become so quickly embedded in the vernaculars, although their origin must be sought in French, and not Russian history.

The search could be extended to other Slavic, and non-Slavic idioms, but this would lead far beyond the scope of the present study. Let it suffice to say that association of the color white with ideas of purity, nobleness, freedom and good, is not limited to the Slavs. Among the Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian and Church Slavonic dictionaries consulted, the following are of interest: E. Berneker, *Slavisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1908–13); V. Dahl, *Tolkovyj slovar' živogo velikorusskogo jazyka* (2nd ed.; St. Petersburg-Moscow, 1912), Vols. I–IV; G. D'jačenko, *Polnyj Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (Moscow, 1900); A. Duvernois, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1894); P. Kalajdovič, *Opyt slovarja russkikh sinonimov* (Moscow, 1818), Vol. I; F. Miklosich, *Lexicon Palaeoslovenico-Graeco-Latinum* (1865–68) and *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der slavischen Sprachen* (Vienna, 1886); A. Preobraženskij, *Etimologičeskij slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1910–16); Akademija Nauk, *Slovar' cerkovno-slavjanskogo i russkogo jazyka* (St. Petersburg, 1847), Vols. I–IV; A. Sokolov, *Obščij cerkovno-slavjano-rossijskij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1854), Vols. I–II; I. Sreznevskij, *Materialy dlja slovarja drevne-russkogo jazyka po pis'mennym pamjatnikam* (St. Petersburg, 1893–1912), Vols. I–III; D. Ušakov and others, *Tolkovyj slovar' russkogo jazyka* (Moscow, 1934–41), Vols. I–IV; A. Vostokov, *Cerkovno-slavjanskij slovar'* (St. Petersburg, 1858–61), Vols. I–II.

103 studied in the light of social ideas and structure of that time. People dwelling on the "white lands" were not free in the sense freedom was understood several centuries later. Sometimes they were burdened with taxes and services heavier than the people working on "black lands." The distinction, however, referred not to the nature or amount of duties, but to whom the duties were rendered. Men who sweated for their lord shared in his freedom. Together with him, they formed that little world in itself which could be a principality, an estate, or simply a large household, identical with the Roman *familia* in many respects. As long as the master of their world was also his own master, no matter how rude and tough he might be, his personal position and the status of his possessions could be termed "white." But if his freedom and power were impaired, or restricted by an intruder, and he had to collect duties from his lands for payment to some outside authority, his position and the legal status of his lands were blackened. The outside authority may be a conqueror, the state, or the city. In other words, "black" was used to describe lands and people under taxes and services *to any power other than of patrimonial origin*. Hence *čern'* in the cities of Novgorod and Pskov; and *černye zemli* in the principalities incorporated into the Muscovite State as distinguished from proper patrimonies of the Muscovite princes.

While all of Russia was "blackened" by the Tatar yoke, the West Russian principalities allied with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania managed to preserve their independence, paying no tribute to either the Tatars or the Lithuanians. Those principalities constituted "White Russia." On the other hand, Russian lands farther west which passed over to the Lithuanian overlords, became known as "Black Russia." By the time Moscow threw off the Tatar yoke and was "white" again, all the Russian lands in the west had fallen under the sway of the Lithuanian Russian State which imposed direct taxes and services upon them. Thus the transition of the whole country from white to black. The name "White Russia" as referring to the Grand Duchy disappeared from documents and literature.

This name was remembered by Moscow in 1667, when the need arose to distinguish the lands ceded by the king of Poland to Russia from the former Muscovite possessions (Treaty of Andrusovo). Tsar Aleksej ordered them to be called *Belaja Rus'*, for they were freed by him from obligations to a "foreign power." But from the point of view of the native, their lands were not "whitened," since one outside authority (Moscow) simply replaced the other (Vilno). The name did not stick. With the partition of Poland, it was revived (1772–95). Catherine II imitated Tsar Aleksej. Provinces "torn away from Russia and returned" were named *Belorussia*, and their administration, the *Belorussian* General Government. After the Polish uprising of 1831, fearing that separatist tendencies might develop in the Lithuanian and Belorussian *gubernii*, the Russian government decided to rename the whole region *West Russia;* and in 1839, the vernaculars were prohibited in churches and schools. Banned from administration, however, "Belorussian" appeared in literature as an ethnographical term. It was also used in Church records to distinguish Russians of Roman Catholic faith from Catholic Poles on the one hand, and from Orthodox Russians on the other.

By the end of the century, the term Belorussian won general recognition in both Russia and Poland. It was translated into foreign languages as "White Russian," and now as "White Ruthenian." To a well-informed European or American there was no difference in these terms. "Ruthenians" is a latinization of the Old Slavic *Rusiny*, first transliterated *Russinen* in the treaty between Prince Mstislav of Smolensk and the City of Riga in 1229. Latin documents used this term indiscriminately for the Grand Duke of Lithuania and the Grand Duke of Moscow: *Rex Litvinorum Ruthenorumque*, and, *Ioannes IV, Rex Ruthenorum*. But well informed Europeans and Americans were few indeed, and it seemed to Belorussian nationalists quite possible that the West might be persuaded to believe that the Ruthenian and Russian were two different races. Thus "White Ruthenian" delegations appeared in the European capitals after the Soviet Revolution, and a memorandum was submitted to the Paris Peace Conference on behalf of the "White Ruthenian Democratic Republic." A group of political emigrants in the United States formed a "White Ruthenian" American National Association in Chicago, Ill., and for some reason changed it later to "White Russian."

Both terms White Ruthenian and White Russian, however, were too close to Russian. This, in the opinion of some Belorussian writers, might seriously hamper the independent development of Belorussian new national self-consciousness and culture. In ancient times, the Kriviči were one of the tribes dwelling on the territory of present Belorussia. Their name sounded far enough from anything Russian, and attempts have been made to substitute the terms *Kryvija, Kryviči* and *Kryvian* for "Belorussia," "Belorussians," and "Belorussian" respectively. In 1928, this usage was prohibited in Soviet Belorussia, but it continued sporadically in Western Belorussia (Poland) and abroad. The term *Kryvija*, however, was not generally accepted by the Belorussian separatists. A new attempt to introduce it in literature is being made by a group of political emigrants in Germany (American Zone)

No uniformity in international Belorussian terminology has been

103 thus far achieved. The situation became still more complicated with World War II, when the term Belorussia (spelled Byelorussia) began to prevail. In this widespread confusion, the terms "White Russian" and "White Ruthenian" must be, it seems to us, discarded. We do not translate such proper names as Spitzbergen, Lichtenstein, Ukraine, Yugoslavia or Argentina, but have embedded them into English. There is no special reason why we should translate Belorussia.

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#34

BYELORUSSIAN COMMUNISM AND NATIONALISM: PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS

by

S. Krushinsky

● 121 Western literature on the Soviet Union is strikingly bereft of material on both the "nationalist deviations" in the U. S. S. R. and the workings of the Communist Party on the local and regional levels. The present manuscript is intended as a contribution toward providing the student with material for filling this gap.

The author provides an account of Byelorussian political life between the two wars, covering many problems not heretofore elucidated in Western literature. The intensified Soviet campaign against "bourgeois nationalists" since the second World War assumes new significance in the light of evidence presented here on similar purges and campaigns antedating the recent drive by many years. In Byelorussia the anti-nationalist campaign affected both Communist nationalists and non-Communist separatists, decimating a considerable part of the national intelligentsia.

The manuscript is based exclusively on the author's personal recollections. It is not the product of research, if only because of the striking lack of printed sources on much of the material which the author covers. It is offered merely as raw material for the Western researcher. While an effort has been made to spot check verifiable dates and events, the manuscript must be considered unedited. In particular, the author's political views are entirely his own and do not necessarily represent those of the sponsoring organization. However, it has seemed proper to present the manuscript in its original form as a contribution toward a hitherto neglected subject.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

● 121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

727 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a
185 series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power,

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

THE NAME "WHITE RUSSIA"[1]

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR

103 THE TERM Belorussia[2] is not well known outside the Slavic world. The area is more frequently referred to as "White Russia." Since 1917, however, use of the latter term has become a source of confusion. The Russians who fought against the Reds in the Civil War of 1918–20 were also called "White Russians." Although in Russian the term *Belorussy*, the ethnic group, and *Belye Russkie*, the political group, are easily distinguishable, there is no way of making the distinction clear in literal translation into English. Many people still cannot understand how an anti-Soviet group succeeded in organizing a republic within the Soviet Union, and why its members are called "white" after they have turned "red." In view of the general confusion, it is perhaps time to suggest that when referring to the ethnic group, the term Belorussian replace the term "White Russian" in our libraries, documents and literature.

The question is: When and why were these lands and people first called "white"?

There is no written evidence that the term White Russia (*Belaja Rus'*, *Alba Russia*) was used before 1382 (Karamzin). At that time, and probably some time before, it was known among the Poles, Livonians, Prussians, and perhaps other Germans (Lamanskij). It designated at least part, if not the whole, of present Belorussia which was at that time a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The origin and meaning of the word "white" as applied to this particular part of the country have been the subject of considerable [291] dispute. Some historians believe the term to have originated from the white clothing, smock, leggings, and homespun overcoat, which the people of this region have worn since time immemorial (Herberstein, Leroy-Beaulieu). Others attribute it to the deep snow which covers the country from October to April, and suggest that the people wore white clothes "because their country was called white" (Tatiščev). [142] Still others find the explanation in the light complexions of the people: fair skin, blond hair, and pale blue eyes (Karskij). The theory which connects the name with the white clothing of the people has apparently been officially adopted in the B. S. S. R. At least Kuzma

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[1] The research basic to this paper was partially supported by a grant from the Russian Research Center of Harvard University.

[2] The spelling *Byelorussia* is preferred by some translators of Soviet literature into English. The author, however, feels that the spelling *Belorussia* is adequate. The use of *y* as a vowel softener in the middle of a word is more likely to confuse the English speaking reader than to aid in pronunciation.

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8: Redmer G-4 (no date) 1947 RCl Belorussia RCl

I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power: the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but vary according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

438 433 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern factories arose. The timber industry was modernised and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

483 241 474 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

[728] In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941-- Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

III. BYELORUSSIA

Be. 101/186

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. 186 642

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be. [182]

Be [728]

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

SU. 635 Be 642 131 161

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

S.U. 635 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of Be. 642 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian ● 131 161 districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

Be. 186 528 Kupala avowed his incapacity to become a real Bolshevik poet, thinking in terms of the whole Soviet Union and of all mankind:

> 'My Fatherland – it is the whole world,
> I have torn myself away from my native soil!
> Yet still I am not free from it – in sleep
> I dream of Byelorussia!'

The role which Kolas and Kupala played in Soviet Byelorussia is unparalleled throughout the U.S.S.R. No Byelorussian Bolshevik ever assumed the role of a national leader of the Byelorussians – the leadership was in the hands of Kolas and Kupala. Instead of 'removing' the two poets, the Soviet régime tried to direct their poetic creation into the 'right channels' and to use them for communist propaganda. Kolas and Kupala were often criticized, at times they seem to have been in disgrace but they never disappeared, as did many excellent writers and poets of almost all the major peoples of the Soviet Union.

S.U. [661] The purge of Kolas and Kupala[1] would have been tantamount to the bankruptcy of the Soviet cultural policy in the B.S.S.R., since the two were not only outstanding literary figures but actually cultural 'awakeners' of their people. Byelorussia could do without its 'national democrat' historians and folklorists, it could do without its leading communist politicians. Kolas and Kupala, however, were indispensable. Their case showed that there are limits even to purges in the Soviet Union. The purge in Byelorussia could not be carried so far as to endanger the cultural foundations of the third largest people of the Soviet Union. This is why Kolas and Kupala were spared despite all their 'sins' and 'deviations'.

The Soviet régime needed Kolas and Kupala not only as pillars of Byelorussian culture in the U.S.S.R. but also as the political heralds of Byelorussian irredentism which might evoke a response among the oppressed Byelorussian population of Poland. The two poets did indeed fulfil this task not as Bolsheviks but as nationalists and denounced most violently the partition of Byelorussia. Most typical in this respect was a poem by Kolas in which he cried out: 'Our homeland has been broken up by foreign robbers . . . Away with their frontiers! Down with their barriers! To us belong the fields and woods! Let us rise together with one mind and one will, happiness and freedom will not come to us of themselves! Long enough have we been hunted and driven from our homeland!'

'GREATER BYELORUSSIA'

Be. 131 728 In September 1939 came the triumph for people like Kolas and Kupala,[2] who by the force of circumstances had abandoned national democracy and embraced some sort of Byelorussian national communism–Byelo-

[1] [Cf. cat. 116, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]
[2] [Cf. Category 538, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

BeloRussia RC1

russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the 131
Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 728
48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its
inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a
State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelo-
russian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the
Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely
economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia [133]
was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the
inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agri-
cultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications.
Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the [133]
annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles
in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per
cent of the total territory.[34]

There are but few small towns in Western Byelorussia; only two 361
localities have about 50,000 inhabitants each, Grodno and Brest Litovsk.
Originally 'Western Byelorussia' as it had emerged from the Molotov-Ribbentrop deal for the partition of Poland, had one town of 100,000 inhabitants, Bialystok, a centre of the Polish textile industry and the only place in the whole of 'Western Byelorussia' possessing a fairly large industrial class. For this reason, Bialystok was chosen as a kind of emergency capital of Western Byelorussia during the weeks between its occupation by the Red Army and its full incorporation into the B.S.S.R. The 'Peoples Assembly' of Western Byelorussia which on October 28th, 1939, formulated its 'request for admission into the U.S.S.R.' also met in Bialystok.

The new 'centre of Western Byelorussia' had the drawback that it had 563
no Byelorussian population; it had only Polish and Jewish inhabitants
and the outskirts of the town were Polish. In view of the national compo- [728]
sition of Bialystok and its surroundings the Soviet Government was
unable to maintain its claim to the Bialystok area after the end of the war, particularly since it was located to the east of the Curzon line which Russia adopted in principle as the Polish-Russian frontier. The area of Bialystok covering roughly 5,800 square miles was thus re-allocated to Poland. This transfer was advantageous for the Soviet Union since the B.S.S.R. rid itself thereby of a Polish population of 1,000,000 and thus considerably reduced the seriousness of the minority problem within its boundaries.

After the annexation of Western Byelorussia the minority issue threatened to cause considerable worry to the Minsk Government, since half of the annexed population were either Poles or Jews. In the post-war B.S.S.R. this problem no longer arose not only because of the substantial frontier rectification in Poland's favour in the Bialystok area,

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

BeloRussia RC1

russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the 131
Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 728
48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its
inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a
State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelo-
russian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the
Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely
economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia [133]
was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the
inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agri-
cultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications.
Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the [133] ●
annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles
in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per
cent of the total territory.[34]

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372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

316
433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

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185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

185 433 Compared with 1940, the capacity of Byelorussian electric power stations in 1950 is to increase by 220 per cent.; peat production is to rise 127 per cent. above the 1940 output; the output of bricks and lime is to increase fourfold; and the production of tile is slated to be about nine times over 1940.

Among the twelve oblasts in the Republic, Minsk oblast is scheduled for the greatest industrial expansion. In the construction programme are new factories for the output of cloth, penicillin, Deft-ware, porcelain, peat briquettes, boilers, radiators, instruments, bicycles, motor trucks, and tractors. The 1950 output for the last three factories is to be 100,000 bicycles, 1,000 7-ton trucks and 5,000 tractors. In the city and environs of Minsk alone capital investments are scheduled at the rate of nearly one million roubles a day during the course of the five years.

Another area in which large developments are projected is Gomel oblast, which in 1950 is to produce 787,000 tons of peat, 90 million bricks and tiles, and five million square metres of window glass. (In 1928 the total Byelorussian output of window glass was estimated at 1,170,000 square metres.)

Forestry

● 137 According to the census of January 1, 1935, the forest area of the B.S.S.R. was 3,317,000 hectares, 22.9 per cent. of the area of the Republic, and 0.6 per cent. of the total forest area of the Soviet Union. Another 2,538,000 hectares were added to the B.S.S.R.'s forest area in 1939, when West Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union.

Timber

313 The production of commercial timber, largely pine, fir and oak, has been centred in the areas of Bobruisk, Mozyr, Borisov, and Polotsk. Timber is considered one of the most valuable of Byelorussia's natural resources, and has figured largely in her relatively insignificant export trade. In 1926-27, for example, an income of 20 million roubles was realized from export of timber, at a time when the Republic's budget totalled 80 million roubles, and the gross output of industry was valued at 133 million roubles. In 1924-25, the only year for which details on the export of timber are available, the timber shipped from the B.S.S.R. amounted to 587,000 cubic metres of firewood and 749,000 cubic metres of other timber. About 60 per cent. of this was sent to the Ukraine (within the U.S.S.R.) and the remainder, plywood, oak, pine, and other products, was shipped abroad via the Baltic States.

The advanced development of the timber industry in the B.S.S.R. is revealed by the number of sawing frames which the Republic had in prewar years. As at April 1, 1939, (before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia) the B.S.S.R. possessed 256 of the Soviet Union's 6,500 frames.

12: Vakar U-4 (no date) 1949 RC1 Byelorussia RC1

THE NAME "WHITE RUSSIA"[1]

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR

103 THE TERM Belorussia[2] is not well known outside the Slavic world. The area is more frequently referred to as "White Russia." Since 1917, however, use of the latter term has become a source of confusion. The Russians who fought against the Reds in the Civil War of 1918–20 were also called "White Russians." Although in Russian the term *Belorussy*, the ethnic group, and *Belye Russkie*, the political group, are easily distinguishable, there is no way of making the distinction clear in literal translation into English. Many people still cannot understand how an anti-Soviet group succeeded in organizing a republic within the Soviet Union, and why its members are called "white" after they have turned "red." In view of the general confusion, it is perhaps time to suggest that when referring to the ethnic group, the term Belorussian replace the term "White Russian" in our libraries, documents and literature.

The question is: When and why were these lands and people first called "white"?

There is no written evidence that the term White Russia (*Belaja Rus'*, *Alba Russia*) was used before 1382 (Karamzin). At that time, and probably some time before, it was known among the Poles, Livonians, Prussians, and perhaps other Germans (Lamanskij). It designated at least part, if not the whole, of present Belorussia which was at that time a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The origin and meaning of the word "white" as applied to this particular part of the country have been the subject of considerable [291] dispute. Some historians believe the term to have originated from the white clothing, smock, leggings, and homespun overcoat, which the people of this region have worn since time immemorial (Herberstein, Leroy-Beaulieu). Others attribute it to the deep snow which covers the country from October to April, and suggest that the people wore white clothes "because their country was called white" (Tatiščev). [142] Still others find the explanation in the light complexions of the people: fair skin, blond hair, and pale blue eyes (Karskij). The theory which connects the name with the white clothing of the people has apparently been officially adopted in the B. S. S. R. At least Kuzma

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[1] The research basic to this paper was partially supported by a grant from the Russian Research Center of Harvard University.

[2] The spelling *Byelorussia* is preferred by some translators of Soviet literature into English. The author, however, feels that the spelling *Belorussia* is adequate. The use of y as a vowel softener in the middle of a word is more likely to confuse the English speaking reader than to aid in pronunciation.

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295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population, as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped.

742 The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

V OUTLOOK IN 1947

146 Although there has been no starvation in the B.S.S.R., almost everyone is undernourished. There is still an acute shortage of fats and oils, meat, milk, and sugar. Such of these foods as were available in 1946 were chiefly from UNRRA; and now that UNRRA food shipments have ceased, there will undoubtedly be privation. The shortage of fats and oils will continue until domestic livestock herds are fattened and replenished; in the meantime, only external help will alleviate the scarcity.

262 Much depends on a good harvest this year. Last December the B.S.S.R. Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Krupenya, in a conference with the UNRRA Mission, stressed the importance of increased food production in 1947 - more seeds, more tractors, more farm workers. A part of the interview is reproduced below. Mr. Waller is Chief of the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Mr. Waller:	"In our observations we have seen villages where there was such devastation that the people...had to be helped with food this year. Will the same need exist next year?"
Mr. Krupenya:	"In some areas it will not be possible to cover the local needs from the produce of the local farms. The population of extremely devastated areas will stand in need of assistance...The government is making plans to assist them."
Mr. Waller:	"What per cent. or number of the village people will need assistance?"
Mr. Krupenya:	"It is hard to say exactly, but at least ten to fifteen per cent. of the rural population in Byelorussia..."
Mr. Waller:	"Will there be starvation (in the B.S.S.R.) if no aid from outside is forthcoming?"
Mr. Krupenya:	"Conditions will be difficult, and aid from outside the Republic will be necessary...Every effort will be made to keep the people from starving."
Mr. Waller:	"If no other aid is received from outside, and without further UNRRA assistance, will there be any danger of starvation?"

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
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III. BYELORUSSIA

Be. 101 186

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. 186 642 Be. [182]

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be. [728]

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

SU. 635 Be. 642 [31] 161

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

S.U. 635 Be. 642 131 161 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be. 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

[762] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native
563 Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five
[798] percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish
563 language and were Belorussian by nationality. In the heyday of the
661 nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The
563 Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

438 433 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern factories arose. The timber industry was modernized and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

483 241 474 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective farms (kolkhoses) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

[728] In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Analyst]

162 inhabitants numbered 4,983,240). The greatest increase had occurred in the towns, largely as a result of the growth of industry. From 1926 to 1939 the urban population of the B.S.S.R. rose from 847,330 to 1,372,522; while the numbers of rural inhabitants remained almost constant: 4,135,410 in 1926 as compared with 4,195,454 in 1939.

In the Soviet Union as a whole, the population had increased by 15.9 per cent., from 147 million in December 1926 to over 170 million in 1939. However, whereas the numbers living in towns had more than doubled (26 million to 55.9 million); the rural population had decreased from 120.7 million to only 114.5 million.

No census has been taken in the Soviet Union since the war; and the present population of the B.S.S.R. is not definitely known. In October 1939, after the incorporation of the ex-Polish regions, it was about 10,386,000 inhabitants.

The principal cities of Byelorussia with their 1939 populations are Minsk, the capital (238,772), Vitebsk (167,424), Gomel (144,169), Mogilev (99,440), and Bobruisk (84,107). As compared with 1926 the populations of all these towns had increased from 64 to 98 per cent. by 1939.

War Losses

721 On June 22, 1941, the German armies, supported by their satellites, attacked the Soviet Union on its 1,500-mile European front; and in the
927 early phase of the war, succeeded in overrunning the western Soviet Republics of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. For the second time in this century these areas were subjected to German occupation and devastation.

Lying directly in the path of the enemy advance towards Moscow, the Byelorussian Republic experienced terrible destruction. Just one month after the initial Nazi attack, the German News Agency announced that the Byelorussian town of Vitebsk (which the Nazis, according to their claim, had captured on July 11), had been "nothing but ruins when
727 occupied". As the war progressed, this bleak statement was to be true of most Byelorussian cities. In August 1941, according to an estimate by Allen and Muratoff,[1] the Germans were employing half their Panzer divisions and at least 40 per cent. of all their available forces in the Vitebsk-Smolensk-Mogilev sector.

Even after the Soviet Army retreat, Byelorussia continued to be a battle ground as Soviet guerillas carried on heroic warfare against the enemy occupying forces.

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[1] The Russian Campaigns of 1941-43, Allen and Muratoff, Penguin Books, London, 1944.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1

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It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 545 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

• Be 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162 Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369 Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517 more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186 struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [565] Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [100] did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [92] intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517] against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186 communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661 life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

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Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population,,as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 742 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped. The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

661 kept in operation through private donations. Belorussian students
553 could not enter the higher schools. The national social organization
"Belorusskaia Gramada," which had 120,000 members, was closed
and its leaders tried and imprisoned. The Orthodox clergy had to use
Polish to preach in the churches and to teach the Law of God in the
schools. The population of western Belorussia knew that in the B. S.
S. R. a state was being built, that /17/ the official language was
Belorussian, that a Belorussian Academy of Sciences, a State Univer-
sity, and other institutions of higher learning were in existence and
that admission to them did not present any particular difficulties--
on the contrary there were the so-called workers' high schools which
prepared those who lacked secondary education for admission into
the universities. National theaters were in operation, and literature
661 and poetry flourished. The Soviet press, which penetrated into western
166 Belorussia, as well as the radio and underground Communist organi-
zations intensified their propaganda about the work in the B. S. S. R..
The Soviet Consulate in Warsaw, by using the Deputy Consul Ul'ianov
who was himself from a Minsk family, generously supplied dollars to
finance anti-Polish propaganda, the pro-Communist press, and various
organizations in western Belorussia. As a result of this, hundreds of
young people streamed across the border into the B. S. S. R., illegally
and at great risk and danger to themselves, in the hopes of getting
into the bright lecture halls of the University of Belorussia. The
intelligentsia also crossed the border to find work and to find some
scope for their abilities. How much bitter disillusionment there
was after 1930, how much inconsolable grief and sorrow for their
unfulfilled hopes and broken young lives. Led by their enthusiasm,
they trustingly dashed into the perfidious and deceiving Soviet flame.
Who could have supposed then that this great constructive work would
be pitilessly crushed and that thousands of Belorussians would perish
in the cellars of the N. K. V. D. or in concentration camps.

First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Community Party of Belorussia

665 Up to 1930 there were several first secretaries of the Communist Party
of Belorussia. All of them were envoys of the Kremlin, in fact plenipo-
tentiaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet
Union--guardians, preservers and exponents of the general line of the

103 Kiselev, chairman of the Belorussian delegation to the United Nations, explained the term "White Russia" as having arisen "because of the national costume of the Belorussians" (Associated Press, May 24, 1946). Simple theories are tempting. As a small part of the country was called Black Russia, some ethnographers also have assumed that this name was given to it because its inhabitants "used to wear black caps and black coats" (Zograf).

One could perhaps accept these theories if the terms White Croat and White and Black Huns were not used long before the term White Russian.[3] As neither natural scenery nor clothing and complexion could have accounted for these names, some other explanation must be sought.

The term "black" has been explained by the fact that, according to the Chinese tradition, black was the color of the north. This concept is apparently common to most of the steppe people throughout the continent, and has been the origin of the terms Black Bulgars, Black Huns, Black Ugrians, and so on (Vernadsky). No evidence, however, has ever been presented to show that people were called "white" because of their geographical position. Even if such evidence did exist, it could not possibly explain the origin of White Russia.
103 Moreover, by the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the six-
175 teenth century, the Poles and Lithuanians used to call Muscovite
Russia "white," and Belorussia "black": "*Ruś pod kniaziem Moskiewskim Białą Rusią nazwano, a tę, która do Polski należała—Czarną*" (Russia under the Prince of Moscow is called White Russia and that which belonged to Poland is called Black).[4] The Novgorodian chronicler of the fifteenth century describes the Byzantine emperor John Paleologue as having said that "the highest form of Christianity is in White Russia where my brother Vasilij Vasilevič (of Moscow) is the king; eastern monarchs obey him and princes serve him with their lands."[5] Latin documents describe Ivan III of Moscow as *Ioannes, dux albae Russiae* (1472). Tred'jakovskij saw White Russia as located on both banks of the Dnieper, with "Smolensk as its capital." The picture is further confused in the seventeenth century when the term "White Russia" also included the Ukrainian lands of Kiev and Volyn (Potebnja).

103 Besides White Russia, a Red Russia, *Červonaja Rus'*, had been known long before the Reds appeared in Russia. It is present Galicia or Western Ukraine. The name has been explained as deriving from

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[3] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, I; English translation by S. H. Cross, *The Primary Russian Chronicle* (Cambridge, Mass., 1930), pp. 138, 140–41.

[4] Quoted from A. Potebnja, p. 119; see *infra*, Bibliographical Note.

[5] *Polnoe sobranie russkikh letopisej*, VI, 152–53; Appendix XIX, p. 117.

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661 645 A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally unacquainted with the agricultural situation in Belorussian and its people, was made President of the Sovnarkom.[1] Before the war, Kiselev was recalled to Moscow and appointed third deputy of the People's Commissariat of Public Health of the R. S. F. S. R.

661 After the Ezhovshchina all the higher echelons, including the Supreme Soviet, the Sovnarkom, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Academy of Sciences, and others took measures to efface from the national memory those figures who had become victims of the terror. Whenever it was necessary to apply some legislative act the correctness of which was not open to question, the signatures of anyone already dead or in a concentration camp were carefully concealed. Every allusion to the decoration of individual figures or institutions, such as the theaters, was destroyed /38/ as having been the work of enemies of the people. Under Ponomarenko the long established Belorussian tradition of appointing a Belorussian as second secretary of the Party was stopped. On Ponomarenko's request Moscow sent its own men out to Belorussia as commissars, directors of Central Committee subdivisions, and secretaries. Not following the example of former Party secretaries, Ponomarenko did not try to make himself popular by attending political meetings or other kinds of gatherings. Organizational work was handled by the other Party secretaries and directors of subdivisions. Ponomarenko loved displaying himself as a patron of the arts. He devoted a lot of attention to organizing various types of 'dekada', even in Moscow. He could be seen at theater premieres and at the Belorussian opera. He was also a sports enthusiast and visited the football matches at the stadiums.

Western Belorussia and Wilno in Soviet Hands

661 177 In 1939 the Red Army forcibly united Soviet Belorussia with its western portion.

A territory including a hundred new rayons was added. It had completely different attitudes toward the forms of state life, and, as might have been expected, a tremendous propaganda campaign on the ideal value of the form and content of Soviet power was initiated in the new rayons with all institutions being reorganized on the Soviet model. Soviet Belorussia alone, however, could not quite cope with this new territory, and workers were sent out from the central oblast's of the R. S. F. S. R.. Their selection was not invariably successful --

[1] [After the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

177 everything grew more and more disorganized just when the situation
661 demanded the strictest order. I must admit that the Belorussian grass-roots population in general, and also the working intelligentsia, did not fear the arrival of the Soviets. Many, especially the poorest of the peasantry, expected free land--while the workers looked forward to the elimination of unemployment. The intelligentsia placed its hopes upon being allowed to acquire learning in its native language without being forced to become Polish or Catholic and upon seeing the Belorussian youth freely admitted into high schools and universities. In truth there was much in the first days after the arrival of the Soviet power that was hard for the Belorussians to understand. For instance, the mass purchase by the Soviets of all food products, shoes, manufactured articles and all the other things which the stores had in abundance--while at the same time the population heard every day, at meetings and on the radio, about the happy and plentiful life in the Soviet Union. Food for thought was also provided by the impoverished appearence of the Soviet employees, even the higher ones, who were coming to western Belorussia to work or on missions. Nor was it easy to understand why the former boundary, together with special passes, /69/ was preserved, and why the local population could not get permission to visit relatives on the other side. The newly created Soviet institutions worked far from smoothly. The population was also badly surprised when an unexpected decree annulled all former Polish money with hardly any exchange for Soviet money and when hard-earned savings as well as other kinds of money was confiscated in banks and savings institutions. This measure put all pensionaries and the whole working population in a very difficult position. There were some instances of landlords and other wealthy persons being murdered as a result of the incitement by propagandists. Those guilty of such killings were never brought to justice for the simple reason that Ponomarenko himself, in a constructive speech to those responsible workers who were just arriving, let it be understood that it was not worth their trouble to attach any importance to such blood vengeance since they testified to the "national anger" of the masses.

Simultaneously there were unceasing arrests throughout all of western Belorussia. The prisons were overflowing with Polish officials and government employees, with peasants who in some function or another had been attached to Polish institutions, with volost' foremen /starshina/, village elders, and policemen. Old Russian emigrants were also arrested, as well as Belorussian soldiers from the Polish Army who had escaped German imprisonment, any of the masses of those who were caught attempting to get into the central zone of Poland which was still under German occupation, members of the local clergy and any well-to-do elements. All who were under severe suspicion were dispatched to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk, and the rest--to concentration camps in Siberia. The conditions of imprisonment were repellent, and the methods employed during examinations were worse even than those of the despised Polished Defensiva. Belorussians openly admitted to the examiners that the Poles had been Polonizing them for twenty years without success, but that with the arrival of the Soviets, Polonization had been accomplished within a few months. This was the general tenor. In addition to the general arrests there were also individual ones, meaning that various segments of the population were liquidated. The first victims were the so-called Polish settlers, that is, the Polish colonizers who were the bulwark of the Polish state in western Belorussia. They were former members of the Polish army who had been allotted private homesteads with twenty to fifty hectares of land on preferential terms as well as being granted preferential /agricultural/ credits. The Orthodox Belorussian population was not even granted the right to buy land from these landlords. However, together with their families they were now shipped off to the east. One winter night all the employees of the forest service were sent off in the same direction /70/ starting with the forest wardens, who had been partly appointed by the Soviets themselves, and extending even to professors of forestry. It was supposed that there were a lot of Polish Army weapons hidden in the woods and that the forest service knew about them; this was the reason for their deportation to Siberia. The families of Polish Army soldiers were likewise arrested and deported. 661 177

A few words about the transfer of the city of Wilno to the still semi-independent Lithuania. This transfer was accomplished at the end of 1939. Wilno is a rich trading city which was forcibly seized by the Polish general, Zhelikhovskii, and then included within the Polish state. When the Red Army occupied Wilno, the general opinion was that it would be included in Soviet Belorussia. However, the plan for seizing the Baltic area had already matured, and negotiations concerning an agreement to quarter Red Army soldiers on Baltic territory were imminent. In order that the Lithuanians should have a good opinion concerning the Soviet intentions toward them it was 000

000 decided to give Wilno to Lithuania, knowing that in this way it would become Soviet.

However, before deserting Wilno even temporarily, the military high command of the Red Army picked a special purchasing commission which bought up manufactured articles with captured Polish money. They also bought hides and leather goods, various types of machinery, etc. All the purchases were taken out of Wilno and exported into the center of the Soviet Union. The bigger merchants concealed most of their wares, but their stores were discovered with the aid of their servants (shop assistants). After the termination of the officially-appointed period for the transfer of Wilno to Lithuania the city remained in the hands of the N. K. V. D. for two more days. The latter liquidated all the "unneeded" elements in the city and the prisons..

557 [665] 177 The Communist guidance of the life of the Belorussian people during P. Ponomarenko's term in office, can be characterized as a period of comparative quiet. No one particularly admired his methods or his personality, but there were no disturbing occurrences similar to those which marked the secretaryships of Gikalo and Volkov. The unification of western Belorussia distracted people's attention to a great extent from the various unnecessary experiments and tensions on the old territory of Soviet Belorussia. Everyone who had the chance, particularly the working intelligentsia, writers, poets, theatrical employees, singers, and musicians, used all their pull to get assigned to the newly-attached territory. Most of them wanted to get acquainted with the new capitalist world and see there the horrible suffering and generally pitiable existence of the peasantry and workers. Instead of it they saw, if not an absolutely high standard of living, at least /71/ the possibility of acquiring both food products and other articles for everyday use. These circumstances dispersed the legend of the oppressiveness of capitalism. In accordance with his means everyone tried to get clothes and shoes for himself, and in particular to buy something for his wife and children. Every conceivable employee in Moscow, from the All-Union Commissariats and various trusts right up to deputy commissars tried to get into Western Belorussia. The directors of Belorussian agricultural trusts acquired light cars with small cylinder displacement and often brought them back even to the All-Union-Commissars, for a price, of course, but a comparatively low one. This type of light car appeared not

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177
way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557
they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 563
national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661
marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence,
but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible
and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some
Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of
the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government
representatives and city people in general. This was the result of
the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661
period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]--
the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores;
there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past,
even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to
light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which
had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N. K. V.
D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was
shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and
senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very
scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were,
although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625
of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words
more need to be said concerning the activity of the N. K. V. D. in 661
this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People
were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies
of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to
foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and
employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with
a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was
the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given
particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already
served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 -- Analyst]

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661 186 Democratic Republic'. The 'Centre' was reported to receive its intructions from Vilna and to recruit its membership from among 'remnants of Kulaks, White Guards and counter-revolutionary nationalists'.

665 186 According to the then First Party Secretary of Byelorussia, Gikalo, the party was forced to fight not only against an outside organization but also against nationalist agents in its own ranks. These nationalist agents, said Gikalo, had penetrated into the party in the early thirties and had apparently succeeded in occupying a large number of positions in the local government machinery. As in the Ukraine, the offensive against the nationalists inside the Communist Party was launched on the express orders of the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party. [171] The All-Union Central Committee intervened in Minsk not only to secure the purity of communist principles in Byelorussia but also to protect in that republic the interests of Russian culture and the Russian language.

Moscow's intervention was precipitated by what became known as the 'Stsepuro Affaire'. A teacher with the name of Stsepuro had written a letter in Russian to a Byelorussian village council. Stsepuro's action led to a nationalistic outcry in which the local communist organizations and Soviet officials sided against the teacher, who in their view, ought to have written in Byelorussian. The matter was taken up by the Moscow newspaper *Pravda* and finally prompted the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party to draw attention to the 'distortion of Soviet nationalities policy' in Byelorussia. The statement of the Central Committee said that any ban against the Russian language and any persecution of persons using Russian were offences 'profitable only to the class enemy'. The Central Committee of the Byelorussian communists drew the necessary conclusions from the rebuke of the Moscow leaders and at a plenary meeting in December, 1933, proclaimed Byelorussian nationalism as the 'main danger'.[32]

Moscow had thus won the first round in the struggle against the local nationalist forces in Byelorussia. The second part of the fight reached its climax in the summer of 1937 when all prominent Byelorussian [661] communists were charged with conducting a nationalist policy. They included Alexander Grigoryevich Chervyakov, President of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic who committed suicide, the Prime Minister, Nikolai Matveyevich Goloded and the First Party Secretary and arch-purger of 1933–34, Gikalo. Both Goloded and Gikalo were executed. The main charge directed against them was that 'they had tried to tear away the Byelorussian people from the socialist culture of the Great Russian people'. The men around Chervyakov, asserted an official publication, 'were determined to oust the Russian language from the schools, to do away with Russian revolutionary plays, with Russian belletristic literature and works of music. They thus made it difficult for

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563 but also, as in the case of the Ukraine, because of the transfer of Poles and Hitler's extermination of the Jews.

Another important task resulting from the annexation of Western Byelorussia still remains to be carried out by the Government of the B.S.S.R. A large proportion of the Western Byelorussians have little or no Byelorussian national consciousness, and they speak some sort of
[197] local Slav dialect which they themselves do not identify as Byelorussian. This applies in particular to the population of Polesia where Polish statistics counted over 700,000 such 'local Slavs'. 'Greater Byelorussia' is now about to round off the formation of a Byelorussian nation by amalgamating the various brands of Byelorussians, not only formally in a purely administrative sense, but also politically and spiritually.

● 177.56 This process, intended to effect the transformation of the Western
563 Byelorussians into a full 'sovietized' people, has encountered consider-
[795] able opposition, particularly among the Roman Catholics who had formed 20 per cent of the entire Byelorussian minority of the former North-Eastern Poland. The Roman Catholic Byelorussians had always most violently opposed the thesis of the 'brotherhood' between Byelorussians and Great Russians and their political organization under the Polish régime, the Christian Democratic Union, significantly called itself 'Byeloruthenian' instead of 'Byelorussian'.

186 Byelorussian opposition to the Soviet régime is dictated not only by economic and religious motives but also by national considerations. Although it has united Western and Eastern Byelorussia, the Soviet Government has offended Byelorussian nationalism by leaving the city of Vilna outside the Byelorussian 'State'. The Western Byelorussians looked upon Vilna as their national cultural centre and there may have been indeed a good case for including it in Byelorussia, but it was politically more expedient to make it the capital of Soviet Lithuania.

The difficulties which the Soviet régime had to face in post-war Byelorussia were not confined to the new western territories. The whole of Byelorussia had been occupied by the Germans for two to three years, and it was only natural that Soviet propaganda had to start in many respects right from the beginning when the Red Army re-entered Byelorussian territory. A statement by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party heralding the new propaganda campaign admitted indirectly that German Nazi propaganda had been successful among Byelorussians. The Communist Party organizations of Byelorussia were instructed in this statement to overcome 'the anti-collectivist and anti-state tendencies' with which the German occupants had indoctrinated the Byelorussian people.[35]

Many expressions of Byelorussian nationalism, however, existed quite independently of the moral consequences of German occupation. Judging by official Soviet admissions, Byelorussian nationalism, particularly

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Evaluation of the Belorussian National Movement

186 So as to bring to a close our observations, which cover many years, we will try to provide an answer to the question whether the national movement in Belorussia was really a positive factor, whether it was of any genuine use to the Belorussian nation, and whether it justified the collossal number of bloody sacrifices which were offered up on the altar of nationalism. In our modest opinion the Belorussian national movement was unconditionally a positive factor in the history of the Belorussian nation, imparting a powerful impetus to the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses, to their cultural regeneration, and to the unprecedented development of national literary creativity, close to and understood by the national masses. As a result of the national advancement, which often lapsed into enthusiasm, the most talented and able figures came forward in all fields of the cultural and economic life of the region. Thanks to these self-sacrificing efforts a high level of research was maintained; there were unquestionable successes in the study of the historic past of the Belorussian nation; a firm foundation was laid for cognizance and study of the natural resources of the region and their eventual exploitation. Of invaluable service to the nation was the circumstance that the old generation of Belorussians was able to inculcate the young students who were their disciples with a love for the work of regenerating the Belorussian nation and to arouse their enthusiasm and unwavering faith in a happy future. The two generations united in a solid front and set to work to accomplish the tasks lying before them. It was fruitful and successful for the simple reason that the struggle did not involve the realization of some kind of abstract idea, as often as not difficult to understand and diffuse, nor was it directed against any particular class nor for any particular class but for the nation as a whole. The goal was clear and the road straight. The young generation was educated to follow the example of the Belorussian leaders, and the time will yet come when it will serve as the foundation for a further advance.

191 The national movement had still another positive aspect. It broke down the perverted concepts which the other peoples of Russia held about the Belorussians, their culture, way of life, manners, and customs; also it clarified the possibilities for an economic development in Belorussia. As far back as tsarist times there had been isolated

attempts to begin a study of the region. /73/ In addition to these well-intentioned efforts there were also superficial, frequently unobjective, studies which put the country on a false track, creating a mistaken impression about Belorussia. The materials on Belorussia were of a peculiar nature, failing to take its historic past into consideration and failing to make sufficient allowance for the tragic consequences of the continual craving of the East and West to master the territory of Belorussia and to denationalize its people. Consequently even such reliable sources of information as the Encyclopedia of Ephron and Brockhaus included some completely biased information about Belorussia and its people. Even Belorussian writers themselves, sincere patriots though they may have been, in some instances distorted the Belorussian reality in their works during the period of creative activity before the 1917 revolution. They resorted to unnecessary exaggeration in portraying the downtrodden state and oppression of the Belorussian peasantry and the severity and impoverished condition of the land. They consciously underemphasized all aspects of this world which were alive and vigorous. Nor were the pre-revolutionary school textbooks objective, especially as concerns geography, since they customarily portrayed the Belorussians as a nation sickly and uneducated, backward and with a primitive mode of life and the Belorussian geography as nothing but a swamp. Through this an erroneous impression was created. The literary, operatic, and theatrical productions, as well as the historical studies in agriculture, which appeared during the flowering of the national movement were certainly not inferior to and in some cases better than those produced by the other nationalities of the Soviet Union. More than that, these scholarly works, literary productions, and periodicals found their way into libraries and university archives in the United States and other western countries where they became the objects of study. They were of great assistance in distinguishing between Belorussia and the series of other guberniyas and oblast's of the Soviet Union. Thus by chance we became aware that in the main library of the city of Columbus a large number of volumes of the scholarly works (in Belorussian) of the Gorets Agricultural Academy are being preserved, together with those of the University of Belorussia and the Academy of Sciences. Even though these works were burned by the N. K. V. D. generally, and particularly when their authors were arrested, still there is the

181 certainty that they have been preserved here in the free world and sooner or later will come into the possession of the Belorussian nation. The time is at hand when the western world will become better acquainted with this remote and almost unknown country.

182 The national movement in Soviet Belorussia exerted a positive influence outside its borders also, upon western Belorussia. The heroic activity and determination of Belorussian patriots strengthened the perseverence of the conscious part of the Belorussian population of Poland, preventing it from yielding to enforced colonization and helping it to preserve its national ties and to use every available means to oppose the advances of Polish chauvinists in their attempts to denationalize the Belorussians. In spite of the closing of all Belorussian national schools in western Belorussia, the intelligentsia studied and learned Belorussian literature, preserved its language, and remained devoted to the nation.

Leading figures of the Belorussian national movement were destroyed, together with their pupils and followers. The Belorussian nation suffered a fearful loss and was left without its standard-bearers; the youth was almost totally deprived of its preceptors; the national values which had been created at such effort and expense were crushed out of existence. The ideals of the Belorussian nation had to be hidden deep underground. But did everything perish?--No! Sprouts have been prepared for a stormy growth and development, and those who have gone before will remain as shining examples for an oppressed Belorussia. And the rebirth to come will be the most valuable remembrance and the richest monument to those Belorussians who gave up their lives for the good of the nation.

similarity between Belbog of Slavic and Bäldäg of Teutonic mythology, they suggested that the Belorussians might be really Balts, and not Slavs at all: *Bělbog*—White God; *Bäldäg*—White Day; *Balts*—the Whites; *Mare Balticum*—White Sea; Belorussians—White Russians—*Baltic* Russians.[10] Indeed, if Belorussia and the Baltic are called "white" for the same reason, albeit in different languages, they must belong together. Mythology and linguistics do not always yield to political purposes. The attempt to separate the Belorussians from the Slavic family did not develop further, and was for some time abandoned.

In 1948, however, the idea reappeared in a periodical published by Belorussian emigrants in the American Zone of Germany. An [181] editorial concedes that the Belorussians "borrowed" many important characteristics, both positive and negative, from the Slavs, but urges "not to close our eyes to the fact that the most valuable characteristics of our national psychology are of Baltic origins, such as general reliability, steadiness, tenacity, dynamism, strong resistance to pressure, mental reserve, etc. We must stress our *baltism*, and not only our slavism." The editorial ends by suggesting a "Federation of Baltic peoples," composed of *Belorussia*, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark.[11] One can see how a linguistic, though dilettante, interpretation of a name might possibly alter the political map.

Another explanation of the term "White Russia" has been seen in the fact that *bĕla, bĕl'* were words used for money, perhaps because of the white color of silver. Only scant evidence of this exists before the fifteenth century, when we first find that in Novgorod, 1 bela=1 kuna. The Primary Chronicle mentions *bĕla, bĕl'* very vaguely. But it appears more frequently in the Lithuanian chronicles (*metriki*), and in documents concerning the Western Dvina region, i.e. the territory more or less connected with present Belorussia.[12] Adjectives often appear as second derivations of a radical which has lost its original meaning, or acquired a special meaning in addition to the original: cf. *zelënyj* (green); *zelen'* (green paint, vegetation); *zelënyj gorod, zelënyj šum, molodo da zeleno* (garden city, rustle of leaves in a forest, young and immature). A sequence: *belyj* (white)—*bel'* (whiteness, silver, coin)—*belyj* (wealthy, rich) would be quite possible; and *belaja Rus'* would mean "the rich, wealthy part of Russia" which would be historically correct for the era in question.

Unfortunately, there are also serious objections to this interpreta-

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[10] *Kryvič* (Kaunas, 1923), IV, 30. Cf. Lith. *báltas; balù, bálti*, "to appear white."

[11] *Bac'kaŭščyna* (Oberhofer, Germany), II, No. 4 (7) (Feb. 15, 1948), 1. Italics mine.

[12] *Belorusskij Arkhiv*, II, 18, 50.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

III. BYELORUSSIA

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'. Be. 101 186

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government. Be. 186 642 Be. [182] ●

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.* Be [728]

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists SU. 635 Be 642 131 161

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

185 471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Belorussian SSR is determined and directed by the State national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of strengthening the Belorussian SSR, and of consolidating the independence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Belorussian SSR work is a duty and matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Belorussian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

631 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

Art. 14. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Moghilev, Molodechno, Pinsk, Polessye and Polotsk Regions.

642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

727 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a
185 series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power, as compared to 1.6 per cent. in 1940. Peat briquette plants, prefabricated housing manufacture, and food processing plants are also to be launched. Except for the planned construction of factories to produce tractors and motor trucks - and these will be assembly plants rather than manufacturing ones - no heavy industry is to be established. The production of agricultural machinery will be a new feature in Byelorussian industry.

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

Also in the five year period, the major cities of Byelorussia are to be restored - particularly Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Orsha, and Borisov. In all seven of these cities peat plants are to be rebuilt, and in most of them, brick plants and other industries such as porcelain works, clothing factories, tanneries, food processing plants, match factories, and agricultural machinery plants. Municipal and cultural services are to be restored, and housing is to be replaced. In the towns of the B.S.S.R. as a whole, 2.7 million square metres of state-owned housing space are to be made available for occupancy in the period 1946-50, including 650,000 square metres to be furnished by local soviets. An additional 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home owners assisted by the state loans.

In the sphere of cultural development, the number of schools in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is scheduled to be 11,375, with an attendance of 1.5 million. The number of hospital beds is to reach 30,000.

Considerable industrial expansion is also planned for the western regions of Byelorussia. According to the plan, these regions are to contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western area is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity in 1950. Other food processing factories are to be built, as well as a number of textile and clothing factories. Electric power stations are to be restored and new ones built, including hydro-electric stations. These are a major need in the western regions, which in 1938 had power facilities that supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland, and were undeveloped in comparison with the Soviet Byelorussia.

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 231 The Five Year Plan, 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries, and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,^1 taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter.
[647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

185 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the
433 B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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[1] Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

1 [in 1946--Analyst]

185 433 grain crop amounted to 119 million tons, and the target for 1950 is set at 127 million metric tons. Production of potatoes in Byelorussia is to increase by 6 per cent., and of flax by 31 percent.

Fishing

226 Before the war fishing was an important source of food supply in Byelorussia, where the many inland lakes and streams abound in pike, perch, bass, sandre, bream, and other fresh-water fish. Osweia Lake, a body of water about 3,500 acres in extent, produced some 500 tons of fish annually, when 50 men were engaged in year-round fishing. At that time the fishing collective at the lake employed nets measuring almost a mile in overall length; but today very little fishing is being done for lack of nets and other equiptment. Osweia is not an isolated example.

[227] An extensive system of fish culture, including the stocking of fish and the addition of chemical fertilizers to assist plant growth in the lakes, was destroyed during the war. The Germans depleted available fish resources by discharging explosives under water to bring the stunned fish to the surface. Many young fish were exterminated by this method of explosive fishing, without regard to conservation. At present the system of fish culture in Byelorussia is being slowly reinstituted, but is handicapped by the lack of nets. UNRRA shipments of fishing gear have, however, contributed valuable assistance in this regard.

The new Five Year Plan provides that "by 1948, pond culture will be restored to pre-war proportions."

The fish catch in 1950 is expected to be 5,200 tons.

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

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185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377
185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

433 manufacturing linen from scraps. The aluminum factory in Borisov was making utensils, but the material available, all of which was supplied by UNRRA, was sufficient for only a small output.

Labour

464 As has already been noted, there is a shortage of all categories of workers. The outstanding characteristic of the present force is the high percentage of women and youthful workers. In the factories observed by the UNRRA Mission, from 75 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women and young people. Many of these are being trained in special schools.

The Five Year Plan in Industry

471 Under the new Five Year Plan for the rehabilitation of the Soviet economy, the volume of capital investments in the B.S.S.R. in 1946-50 is to be 6,950 million roubles, including 2,422 million for works under the Republic's jurisdiction. In the Soviet Union as a whole, capital investments for the same period are to amount to 250,300 million roubles, of which 157,500 million are to be used in industry.

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185 The volume of production of Soviet industry in 1950 (the last year of the five year period) is fixed at 205,000 million roubles (in 1926-27 prices), an increase of 48 per cent. as compared with the 1940 output of 138,500 million roubles.

In Byelorussia, the volume of industrial goods produced by the Republic in 1950 is to exceed pre-war output by 16 per cent. The enterprises under the Republic's jurisdiction are to produce goods valued at 2,200 million, of which the output of state industries under local jurisdiction and of industrial co-operatives is to comprise 850 million roubles. The following table shows the physical goals fixed for Byelorussian industry under the Plan.

TABLE IX

B.S.S.R.: 1950 Planned Industrial Output Compared with U.S.S.R. Total

	Byelorussian Republic	Soviet Union total
Electric power (kilowatts)	650,000,000	82,000,000,000
Peat (tons)	4,162,000	44,300,000
Metal-working machines (units)	4,325	74,000[1]
Tractors (units)	5,000	112,000
Cement (tons)	320,000	10,500,000
Window glass (square metres)	5,000,000	80,000,000
Felled timber (cubic ")	11,100,000	280,000,000
Dressed lumber (cubic metres)	1,800,000	39,000,000
Matches (thousand boxes)	1,550,000	n.a.
Meat (tons)	46,000	1,300,000
Butter (tons)	10,000	275,000
Fish catch (tons)	5,200	2,200,000
Alcohol (decalitres)	7,600,000	100,800,000

[1] Tractor production:

Russian S.F.S.R.	82,000
Ukraine S.S.R.	25,000
Byelorussian S.S.R.	5,000
Total	112,000

Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

The post-war Five Year Plan is a programme encompassing both reconstruction and new construction. Its aim is not only to restore war devastated industry, but to exceed pre-war production. Some indication of the expansion involved may be obtained from a comparison between Table IX and the following table, which shows the pre-war output of certain products for Byelorussia compared with the output of the Soviet Union as a whole. The figures given refer, of course, to the former boundaries of the Byelorussian Republic.

TABLE X

Output of Certain Products in the B.S.S.R., 1932, and Planned Output for 1937
(metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Percentage of total U.S.S.R. output	
	1932	Planned for 1937	1932	Planned for 1937
Peat	800,000	2,100,000	6.06	8.47
Cement	n.a.	110,000		1.57
Meat	12,300	28,800	2.83	2.30

Source: Second Five Year Plan, Moscow, 1934, Vol. II, p.498.

185 433 Compared with 1940, the capacity of Byelorussian electric power stations in 1950 is to increase by 220 per cent.; peat production is to rise 127 per cent. above the 1940 output; the output of bricks and lime is to increase fourfold; and the production of tile is slated to be about nine times over 1940.

Among the twelve oblasts in the Republic, Minsk oblast is scheduled for the greatest industrial expansion. In the construction programme are new factories for the output of cloth, penicillin, Deft-ware, porcelain, peat briquettes, boilers, radiators, instruments, bicycles, motor trucks, and tractors. The 1950 output for the last three factories is to be 100,000 bicycles, 1,000 7-ton trucks and 5,000 tractors. In the city and environs of Minsk alone capital investments are scheduled at the rate of nearly one million roubles a day during the course of the five years.

Another area in which large developments are projected is Gomel oblast, which in 1950 is to produce 787,000 tons of peat, 90 million bricks and tiles, and five million square metres of window glass. (In 1928 the total Byelorussian output of window glass was estimated at 1,170,000 square metres.)

Forestry

137 According to the census of January 1, 1935, the forest area of the B.S.S.R. was 3,817,000 hectares, 22.9 per cent. of the area of the Republic, and 0.6 per cent. of the total forest area of the Soviet Union. Another 2,538,000 hectares were added to the B.S.S.R.'s forest area in 1939, when West Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union.

Timber

313 The production of commercial timber, largely pine, fir and oak, has been centred in the areas of Bobruisk, Mozyr, Borisov, and Polotsk. Timber is considered one of the most valuable of Byelorussia's natural resources, and has figured largely in her relatively insignificant export trade. In 1926-27, for example, an income of 20 million roubles was realized from export of timber, at a time when the Republic's budget totalled 80 million roubles, and the gross output of industry was valued at 133 million roubles. In 1924-25, the only year for which details on the export of timber are available, the timber shipped from the B.S.S.R. amounted to 587,000 cubic metres of firewood and 749,000 cubic metres of other timber. About 60 per cent. of this was sent to the Ukraine (within the U.S.S.R.) and the remainder, plywood, oak, pine, and other products, was shipped abroad via the Baltic States.

The advanced development of the timber industry in the B.S.S.R. is revealed by the number of sawing frames which the Republic had in prewar years. As at April 1, 1939, (before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia) the B.S.S.R. possessed 256 of the Soviet Union's 6,500 frames.

313 This high proportion should be contrasted with the small forest area of this Republic in relation to that of the whole U.S.S.R.

185 313 433 The goal set for timber deliveries by the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is 11,100,000 cubic metres; and cuttings during the period 1946-50 are planned at 58,400,000 cubic metres. The aggregate timber deliveries attained during four and one-quarter years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-32, amounted to 32,600,000 cubic metres, or 7,670,000 annually. In 1928 it had been estimated that the timber resources of the B.S.S.R. were adequate to permit cuttings of 12 million cubic metres a year by 1932. This scale of cuttings was never reached, but the figure is mentioned here because it approximates the present plan of annual deliveries set for 1950, at a time when the area of Byelorussia is about double what it was in 1928.

The reason for this is that a large amount of easily accessible timber was burned out by the Germans during the war. The Governor of Vitebsk oblast, quoting from official figures, told members of the UNRRA Mission in June 1946 that 22 per cent. of the oblast was covered by good timber before the war but at present only 16 per cent. It was estimated by the Governor of Polotsk oblast that 46 percent. of the forests of the oblast were cut, burned or taken away during the war. Post-war cutting operations will therefore be restricted in many areas, and a reforestation programme will be carried out on an area of 189,000 hectares. Meanwhile, felling will be centred in the dense swamp areas previously untouched and impossible to exploit without extensive development of motor and narrow-gauge haulways provided for in the Five Year Plan.

Of the 1950 goal for timber production, 5 million cubic metres is set for annual production under the direction of the Timber Ministry of the B.S.S.R. An undisclosed amount will be produced under the auspices of local and co-operative industry. Although no full details are at present available, nevertheless, a few comparisons with pre-war production are possible. For example, in 1928 the production of plywood in Byelorussia amounted to 59,000 cubic metres, and in 1940 to 254,000 cubic metres (36.2 per cent. of the plywood output of the Soviet Union). In 1950 the plywood output of republican, local, and co-operative industry is scheduled to be 118,500 cubic metres. No pre-war figures are available for sawn lumber output, except for 1928, when 636,060 cubic metres were produced. The planned output of sawn lumber for 1950 is 1,800,000 cubic metres, nearly three times the 1928 amount.

[439] As for the export of timber, no figures are available, but it is
known that Byelorussian timber has been and still is an important source
of mine props for the Donets coal mines in the Ukrainian S.S.R.
313 However, in view of the tremendous shelter rehabilitation programme in
185 devastated Byelorussia, it does not seem likely that there will be much
surplus timber available. Of 400,000 collective farm houses scheduled
for restoration, only 60,000 are to be built of brick. An equal, if
not larger, number of public buildings were destroyed on collective farms;

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or
6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which
was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons,
or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the
U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans
systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had
eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were
then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the
U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced.
During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the
remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946,
when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had
one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many
processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which
are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing,
without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a
few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present
operations are carried out in the single building which has been
restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the
match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in
operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a
year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this
output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and
additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
372 electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

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433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

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185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from
restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
433 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet
185 production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15
per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced
under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in
433 1950 is expected to be as follows:

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Shoes	7	million pairs
Hosiery	13.5	" "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000	units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000	"

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were
almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from
UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme,
has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when
UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk,
facilities were estimated to be as follows.

TABLE XI

377 727 Electric Power Facilities in Four Byelorussian Cities, Pre-War and June 1946

City	Population June 1946	Pre-war capacity of electric stations (kilowatts)	June 1946 as per-cent. of pre-war
Borisov	43,000	4,500	22
Orsha	34,000	30,000	10
Vitebsk	62,000[1]	12,000	6
Polotsk	24,000	2,500	2

[1] 1939 population: 167,424.

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

In these cities, all electricity available was being consumed by industry and public institutions, while dwellings were virtually without light. At Orsha, the restored facilities could have furnished light to dwellings as well, provided there had been wiring, switches, and bulbs.

The situation in rural areas is even worse. Before the war many collective farms had their own small electric power stations, all of which were plundered or destroyed by the Germans. The Surazh raion had six small farm stations with a total capacity of 800 kilowatts before the war; but even as late as June 1946 it had nothing, because although a new station was under construction at Surazh, there was no equipment for it.

The present shortage of electric power is a serious obstacle hampering industrial recovery. In this respect, UNRRA is making a considerable contribution. As at October 1, 1946, 30 power units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been shipped to the B.S.S.R., and 35 additional units representing electric generating capacity of 10,400 kilowatts were still to be delivered.

185 377 The Five Year Plan calls for the output of 650 million kilowatt hours of energy in 1950. To achieve this, electric power stations with a capacity of 243,000 kilowatts are to be rebuilt and put into operation. Small hydro-electric stations with a total capacity of 16,000 kilowatts are to be built, and the municipal power stations at Gomel, Mozyr, Grodno, and other towns restored.

For the development of the economy of the Republic, there are to be put into operation electric power stations under the Republic's jurisdiction with a total capacity of 47,000 kilowatts, including hydro-electric stations with 10,000 kilowatt capacity.

Housing Reconstruction

727 The cities of Byelorussia were universally laid waste by the Germans, and even today they are still in ruins with great empty spaces and blocks of gutted buildings. Rebuilding is proceeding slowly.

362 ●185 According to official estimates, 74 per cent. of the housing space in cities and raion centres of the B.S.S.R. was destroyed during the war. The Five Year Plan calls for the restoration of 4,200,000 square metres of urban housing during the next five years, of which 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home builders assisted by state loans. During the two years between liberation and September 1946, a total of 1.2 million square metres of housing had been restored in cities and raion centres; but this was the easiest part of the work, since it involved mostly the repair of those buildings which still had some walls standing. Housing restoration will have to move at a faster rate than 600,000 square metres a year to reach the 4.2 million square metres goal by 1950, when there is to be an estimated 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space in Byelorussia.

In the restoration plans, provision is made to erect three prefabricated house factories with a combined annual output capacity of 600,000 square metres of housing by 1950.

The long-term housing plan is to provide 9 square metres per person, according to the Mayor of Minsk. However, in October 1946 facilities were much below that standard, and it seemed doubtful to the UNRRA Mission whether the figure would be reached by 1950.

The present per capita housing space available is not known. But in cities like Comel, UNRRA Mission observers have been given estimates that available houses are occupied at double to triple their pre-war capacity.

The only available figures on pre-war housing are those for the first Five Year Plan period. These apply to what were then classed as "okrug", or regional cities, of which there were in 1927, eleven with a combined population of approximately 540,000. In 1927-28 they had a total of 3,093,000 square metres of housing space, occupied at the rate of 5.5 square metres per person. The first Five Year Plan called for expanding the housing space in "okrug" cities to a total of 4,263,000 square metres, occupied at the rate of 6.69 square metres per person.

The target of 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space by 1950 is about double the 1932 figure. This amount, including housing in some 170 raion (district) centres, is distributed among what are classed as "oblast" cities (these governed directly by the oblast or regional soviet as well as by the local city soviet), which were 18 in number in 1945. Among this number are all those cities classed as "okrug" cities in 1926, plus seven cities in the western oblasts; Baranovichi, Brest, Vileika, Grodno, Lida, Molodechno, and Pinsk.

362 •185 These seven cities were not included in the 1939 census, when the total urban population of Byelorussia was determined as nearly 1.4 million persons. Assuming that the urban centres of Byelorussia merely recover their pre-war population, and if the urban residents of western Byelorussia be included, the per capita urban housing space available in 1950 will certainly be much less than 9 square metres, since at that rate 8.2 million square metres could supply only about 900,000 occupants. The actual per person rate of urban housing space in 1950 is more likely to be near the 1932-33 rate if planned targets of reconstruction are achieved.

727 In the rural areas of the B.S.S.R., shelter demolition amounted to 400,000 dwellings of collective farmers, and an indeterminate number of individual peasant homes. In the western oblasts, as has already been noted, the great majority of farmers are not yet in collectives. In a single oblast, Molodechno, 16,000 peasant farms were laid waste. In Grodno oblast, where 117,000 civilians were slain by the Germans, demolition of homes was on a equal, if not greater scale. Thousands of individual peasant homes were also destroyed in other oblasts. A reported total of 1.2 million buildings of all kinds, houses, barns, sheds, offices, were destroyed in the rural areas. As at October 1946, 235,000 dwellings had been restored in the villages, providing shelter for 1.5 million people who were then able to move out of temporary shelters, mostly dugouts and caves. On the whole, progress in the restoration of shelter seems to be more rapid in the villages than in the cities.

Supplementary Aid from the U.S.S.R.

727 362 On December 31, 1946, the Byelorussian Council of Ministers published in "Sovietskaya Byelorussia" a statement that at its request the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. had adopted a decree providing for assistance in the restoration of raions of the B.S.S.R. which had especially suffered from the occupation.

Under the terms of the decree, 27 million roubles have been granted by the U.S.S.R. for expenditure on 2,000 dwelling houses to be constructed in the areas of Byelorussia most devastated by the war. Built at state expense, these houses are to provide shelter for the most needy: families of war invalids, and of fighters (both army and partisan) killed in the war. The total fund is allocated for distribution among 38 districts or raions which are all situated in the eastern and central oblasts of the Republic. Vitebsk, Polotsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Minsk, Bobruisk, and Polessia oblasts are to benefit by the grant.

665 among the Party rank-and-file. He was recalled to Moscow to the agitation and propaganda section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. After his removal to Moscow he quickly forgot about the work in Belorussia. While director of the agitation and propaganda section in the Kremlin, Krinitskii at one conference sharply rebuked the president of Belorussia who was making a speech in Belorussian since he had not fully mastered Russian. Krinitskii reproved him, recommending that he speak in Russian.

After Krinitskii, in 1928, the First Secretary was the Latvian, Knorin. His activity left a definite mark, the more so since the Kremlin twice sent him to Belorussia as secretary. Knorin got acquainted with the leaders of the national movement and understood the strivings of the Belorussians for national rebirth, aided in the national work, and supported the initiative of the Belorussians. After he left, in 1928, Jan Gamarnik (1) an Austrian by nationality /19/ became First Secretary. Correct and tactful, a good orator and organizer, he did not introduce any changes in the national work. Gamarnik did not become intimate with anyone, especially in Belorussia. His activity did not last long--first appointed Director of the Political Administration of the Belorussian Military District he was then transferred to the post of Director of the Political Administration of the Red Army. In about 1928 or 1929 the Kremlin sent the Estonian, Gei, as secretary to Belorussia.

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186 In a comparatively short period the national work in Belorussia had carved a broad path for itself. The rebirth of a national culture was an indisputable fact; cadres of youth had been trained and posted all throughout the state apparatus. The region was healing itself of the wounds inflicted by wars and occupations; it appeared that the Communism of the war years had gone, never to return. There was some thought of conquering new positions since the national work and all its measures had found unquestioning support among the broad masses of the Belorussian people... The Party leadership,

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1. The Large Soviet Encyclopedia states that in his youth Gamarnik lived in Kiev. In Minsk he was considered a Czech. As we know, Gamarnik was subsequently shot together with Tukhachevskii. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. XIV, p. 456.

665 186 sent by the Politburo in the persons of the first secretaries, in the majority of cases adopted a strictly formal attitude toward the national work. It is possible that only Knorin really understood the situation. Secretary Krinitskii learned Belorussian and occasionally made speeches in it, but even so it was only to produce a good impression on the Kremlin and in order to assist his Party career in this way, that he did it.

The First Victims

161 Up to 1930, there had only been one trial aimed directly at a nationalist. In 1926, Iu. Listopad, a non-Party teacher of Belorussian in the high schools, was arrested in Slutsk. He was tried in Minsk for organizing some sort of plot against the Soviet Authority. The trial was open to the public, and there were lawyers for both the presecution and defense. The students gave Listopad stormy ovations, and flowers were even brought to him during the trial. However the whole affair was cleverly and insidiously organized. The judges were members of the Belorussian intelligentsia and the Public Prosecutor, a well-known nationalist writer, D. Zhilunovich. /20/ It was all so well arranged that even Listopad's warmest supporters were forced to judge and condemn him. He was sentenced to five years in a reformatory--as the prisons were still called at that time. The shadows continued to thicken even after Listopad's trial had been forgotten. The twilight of the NEP was coming, and by the end of 1928 the cities were beginning to feel the shortage of agricultural products. In the Ukraine and other grain producing areas the Soviet regime was beginning to organize the first Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), the forerunners of the collectivization which was soon to sweep over the peasantry.

In the beginning of 1931, Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii, an academician and the leader of the Belorussian nationalists, fell a victim of the B. P. U. He had been called in for interrogation and afterwards shot himself in his own apartment. (1)

1. The suicide of Professor Ignatovskii was the last, as well as the most decisive act in the particular "case" of the S. V. B. * with which the G. P. U. had intended to connect him. The "case" was closed, and all those implicated were sent into exile in administrative functions--only the Communists Balitskii, Prishchepov, Al. Adamovich, and Il'iuchenos /sic/ were sent to concentration camps.

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* Belorussian abbreviation, Cf. p. 6 meaning:Union for the liberation of Belorussia.

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
626 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any

1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

186 661 was being devoted to the life and work of Doctor Skarina. Portraits of him were printed in large quantities, and they decorated the halls of learned and cultural institutions, schools, museums, etc. There was a large plaster figure of him in the vestibule of the Institute of Belorussian Culture which in 1928 was transferred to the Academy of Sciences. After the proscription of National-Democracy the statue of the learned doctor of the sixteenth century was thrown out. Even the little statues of Skariny were destroyed, and a similar fate attended the portraits and statuettes of the other national hero, the leader of the Belorussian insurgents, K. Kalinovskii.

208 In order to compromise the National-Democrats and their activities completely the new director of Narkompros* of the B. S. S. R., I. Gurskii, was ordered to have a play written with the appropriate content. Gurskii decided that he would write it himself and thus make his career. Not gifted with a dramaturgic abilities, he did not write a play but a worthless burlesque on people who had already seen the inside of G. P. U. cellars. Making use of his official position Gurskii compelled the First Theater to accept this talentless work for production. Enormous material resources were used in staging it, to the great detriment of the other theaters . . . However, neither material expenditures nor the director's efforts could help the play in the slightest. Gurskii portrayed the National-Democrats as drunkards and depraved elements. The attempt of the universally respected and talented poet, Ia. Kupala, to take his own life was depicted as the foolhardy escapade of a drunkard. After two or three performances, Gurskii's play, as obviously worthless, forced, and spurious, was withdrawn without any particular fuss, criticism, contrite admissions, or confessions of error on the part of the author . . . So the atempt to use the stage for persecuting the National-Democrats was for the present not crowned with success. From Soviet newspapers it has been ascertained that I.Gurskii recently "responded" with two plays on post-war kolkhoz life: Khleb /Bread / Svoi Liudi /One's Own People/. They met the same fate as his "response" of twenty-two years ago./34/ They were panned by the critics and did not even get to the stage.

661 Simultaneously with the arrest of the National-Democrats all of their writings were withdrawn from libraries, reading rooms, and general circulation, independently of whether or not they had any connection with the charges brought against the prisoners.

* [People's commissariat of Public Education-Analyst]

7: Krushinsky--81 G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

Evaluation of the Belorussian National Movement

186 So as to bring to a close our observations, which cover many years, we will try to provide an answer to the question whether the national movement in Belorussia was really a positive factor, whether it was of any genuine use to the Belorussian nation, and whether it justified the collossal number of bloody sacrifices which were offered up on the altar of nationalism. In our modest opinion the Belorussian national movement was unconditionally a positive factor in the history of the Belorussian nation, imparting a powerful impetus to the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses, to their cultural regeneration, and to the unprecedented development of national literary creativity, close to and understood by the national masses. As a result of the national advancement, which often lapsed into enthusiasm, the most talented and able figures came forward in all fields of the cultural and economic life of the region. Thanks to these self-sacrificing efforts a high level of research was maintained; there were unquestionable successes in the study of the historic past of the Belorussian nation; a firm foundation was laid for cognizance and study of the natural resources of the region and their eventual exploitation. Of invaluable service to the nation was the circumstance that the old generation of Belorussians was able to inculcate the young students who were their disciples with a love for the work of regenerating the Belorussian nation and to arouse their enthusiasm and unwavering faith in a happy future. The two generations united in a solid front and set to work to accomplish the tasks lying before them. It was fruitful and successful for the simple reason that the struggle did not involve the realization of some kind of abstract idea, as often as not difficult to understand and diffuse, nor was it directed against any particular class nor for any particular class but for the nation as a whole. The goal was clear and the road straight. The young generation was educated to follow the example of the Belorussian leaders, and the time will yet come when it will serve as the foundation for a further advance.

191 The national movement had still another positive aspect. It broke down the perverted concepts which the other peoples of Russia held about the Belorussians, their culture, way of life, manners, and customs; also it clarified the possibilities for an economic development in Belorussia. As far back as tsarist times there had been isolated

181 certainty that they have been preserved here in the free world and sooner or later will come into the possession of the Belorussian nation. The time is at hand when the western world will become better acquainted with this remote and almost unknown country.

182 The national movement in Soviet Belorussia exerted a positive influence outside its borders also, upon western Belorussia. The heroic activity and determination of Belorussian patriots strengthened the perseverence of the conscious part of the Belorussian population of Poland, preventing it from yielding to enforced colonization and helping it to preserve its national ties and to use every available means to oppose the advances of Polish chauvinists in their attempts to denationalize the Belorussians. In spite of the closing of all Belorussian national schools in western Belorussia, the intelligentsia studied and learned Belorussian literature, preserved its language, and remained devoted to the nation.

Leading figures of the Belorussian national movement were destroyed, together with their pupils and followers. The Belorussian nation suffered a fearful loss and was left without its standard-bearers; the youth was almost totally deprived of its preceptors; the national values which had been created at such effort and expense were crushed out of existence. The ideals of the Belorussian nation had to be hidden deep underground. But did everything perish?--No! Sprouts have been prepared for a stormy growth and development, and those who have gone before will remain as shining examples for an oppressed Belorussia. And the rebirth to come will be the most valuable remembrance and the richest monument to those Belorussians who gave up their lives for the good of the nation.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

Chapter X. Arms, Flag, Capital

186 Art. 119. The arms of the Belorussian SSR are a sickle and hammer, against the rays of the rising sun, and surrounded by ears of rye, intertwined on the left with clover and on the right, with flax; below, between the two sheaves is a part of the globe. Both sheaves are intertwined with a red band inscribed with "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the Belorussian and Russian languages and, below, with the initials "BSSR". Above the arms is a five-pointed star.

Art. 120 . The state flag of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a red cloth, with a gold sickle and hammer and a red, gold-bordered, five-pointed star above, and the gold letters "BSSR" above[1] in the upper corner, near the staff.

Art. 121. The Capital of the Belorussian SSR is the City of Minsk.

Chapter XI. Procedure for Amending the Constitution

642 Art. 122. The Constitution of the Belorussian SSR may be amended only by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR adopted by a majority not less than two-thirds of the votes of the Supreme Soviet.

Note: "Byelroussia" is now the correct spelling in English as accepted by the Committee for the Standardisation of Geographical Names of the United Nations.

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000 This English translation was made from a Russian text published by the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1947.

[1] [Errata: should read "below"--- Analyst]

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III. BYELORUSSIA

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The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. 186 642

Be. [182]

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be. [728]

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

SU. 635 Be 642 131 161

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186 ●
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [565]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [100]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [192]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

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661 Democratic Republic'. The 'Centre' was reported to receive its intruc-
186 tions from Vilna and to recruit its membership from among 'remnants of
Kulaks, White Guards and counter-revolutionary nationalists'.

665 According to the then First Party Secretary of Byelorussia, Gikalo,
186 the party was forced to fight not only against an outside organization but also against nationalist agents in its own ranks. These nationalist agents, said Gikalo, had penetrated into the party in the early thirties and had apparently succeeded in occupying a large number of positions in the local government machinery. As in the Ukraine, the offensive against the nationalists inside the Communist Party was launched on the express orders of the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party.
[171] The All-Union Central Committee intervened in Minsk not only to secure the purity of communist principles in Byelorussia but also to protect in that republic the interests of Russian culture and the Russian language.

Moscow's intervention was precipitated by what became known as the 'Stsepuro Affaire'. A teacher with the name of Stsepuro had written a letter in Russian to a Byelorussian village council. Stsepuro's action led to a nationalistic outcry in which the local communist organizations and Soviet officials sided against the teacher, who in their view, ought to have written in Byelorussian. The matter was taken up by the Moscow newspaper *Pravda* and finally prompted the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party to draw attention to the 'distortion of Soviet nationalities policy' in Byelorussia. The statement of the Central Committee said that any ban against the Russian language and any persecution of persons using Russian were offences 'profitable only to the class enemy'. The Central Committee of the Byelorussian communists drew the necessary conclusions from the rebuke of the Moscow leaders and at a plenary meeting in December, 1933, proclaimed Byelorussian nationalism as the 'main danger'.[32]

Moscow had thus won the first round in the struggle against the local nationalist forces in Byelorussia. The second part of the fight reached its climax in the summer of 1937 when all prominent Byelorussian com-
[661] munists were charged with conducting a nationalist policy. They included Alexander Grigoryevich Chervyakov, President of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic who committed suicide, the Prime Minister, Nikolai Matveyevich Goloded and the First Party Secretary and arch-purger of 1933–34, Gikalo. Both Goloded and Gikalo were executed. The main charge directed against them was that 'they had tried to tear away the Byelorussian people from the socialist culture of the Great Russian people'. The men around Chervyakov, asserted an official publication, 'were determined to oust the Russian language from the schools, to do away with Russian revolutionary plays, with Russian belletristic literature and works of music. They thus made it difficult for

the Byelorussian people to acquire both the inexhaustible cultural 665
treasures of the Russian people and the great cultural values created by 186
the Socialist Revolution'.

At the same time,* Stalin's opponents among the Byelorussian com- 563
munists were accused of having been too liberal to the Polish minority
in Byelorussia, a strange accusation from a party which professes to adhere to an internationalist ideology. The 'polonizing activities' of the Byelorussian 'Trotskyites, Bukharinites and national-fascists' consisted in having allowed a number of localities in Byelorussia to conduct their business in the Polish language and in having sanctioned the existence of a number of Polish schools.[33]

The purge of the Byelorussian communists terminated the policy of
tolerance which the Byelorussian Government had shown towards its
national minorities. This tolerance had been symbolically expressed in [186]
the coat of arms of the Byelorussian S.S.R., which contained the inscription 'Workers of the World Unite' in four languages: Byelorussian, Great Russian, Yiddish and Polish. The coat of arms in use since 1937 shows the same inscription in Byelorussian and Great Russian only. Together with the Polish inscription in Byelorussia's coat of arms the 'Polish National District' of the Byelorussian S.S.R. likewise disappeared. This district had served purposes similar to those of the 'Polish National District' of the Ukraine. It was called after Feliks Dzerzhinsky.

KOLAS AND KUPALA – BYELORUSSIAN LEADERS

The history of the fight between the Kremlin and Byelorussian nation- 186
alism includes the interesting case of the two prominent poets and 538
writers, Yanko Kupala (1882-1942) and Yakub Kolas, whom the Soviet régime drew over to the side of the 'proletarian revolution'. Both belonged to the petty bourgeois Byelorussian nationalist movement grouped around the weekly *Nasha Niva* (Our Cornfield) which long before the October Revolution was the first publication to advocate autonomy for the Byelorussian people.

Kupala was the son of an impoverished nobleman unable to pay for a higher education for his son. Kolas was of peasant origin. Kupala and Kolas had in common their violent hatred of the Polish landowners who owned over 6,000,000 acres of Byelorussian soil in 1914. As a symbolic challenge to the Poles they both threw off their Polish-sounding family names of Lutsevich and Mitskevich respectively and became known under their literary pseudonyms.

Kupala and Kolas found it difficult to overcome their 'bourgeois prejudices'. In their innermost feelings they remained nationalists however hard they tried to be 'good Soviet citizens'. In one of his poems

*[Cf. category 186, pp. 155-157--Analyst]

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538 Kupala avowed his incapacity to become a real Bolshevik poet, thinking in terms of the whole Soviet Union and of all mankind:

> 'My Fatherland – it is the whole world,
> I have torn myself away from my native soil!
> Yet still I am not free from it – in sleep
> I dream of Byelorussia!'

The role which Kolas and Kupala played in Soviet Byelorussia is unparalleled throughout the U.S.S.R. No Byelorussian Bolshevik ever assumed the role of a national leader of the Byelorussians – the leadership was in the hands of Kolas and Kupala. Instead of 'removing' the two poets, the Soviet régime tried to direct their poetic creation into the 'right channels' and to use them for communist propaganda. Kolas and Kupala were often criticized, at times they seem to have been in disgrace but they never disappeared, as did many excellent writers and poets of almost all the major peoples of the Soviet Union.

S.U.
[661] The purge of Kolas and Kupala[1] would have been tantamount to the bankruptcy of the Soviet cultural policy in the B.S.S.R., since the two were not only outstanding literary figures but actually cultural 'awakeners' of their people. Byelorussia could do without its 'national democrat' historians and folklorists, it could do without its leading communist politicians. Kolas and Kupala, however, were indispensable. Their case showed that there are limits even to purges in the Soviet Union. The purge in Byelorussia could not be carried so far as to endanger the cultural foundations of the third largest people of the Soviet Union. This is why Kolas and Kupala were spared despite all their 'sins' and 'deviations'.

The Soviet régime needed Kolas and Kupala not only as pillars of Byelorussian culture in the U.S.S.R. but also as the political heralds of Byelorussian irredentism which might evoke a response among the oppressed Byelorussian population of Poland. The two poets did indeed fulfil this task not as Bolsheviks but as nationalists and denounced most violently the partition of Byelorussia. Most typical in this respect was a poem by Kolas in which he cried out: 'Our homeland has been broken up by foreign robbers . . . Away with their frontiers! Down with their barriers! To us belong the fields and woods! Let us rise together with one mind and one will, happiness and freedom will not come to us of themselves! Long enough have we been hunted and driven from our homeland!'

'GREATER BYELORUSSIA'

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728 In September 1939 came the triumph for people like Kolas and Kupala,[2] who by the force of circumstances had abandoned national democracy and embraced some sort of Byelorussian national communism–Byelo-

[1] [Cf. cat. 116, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]
[2] [Cf. Category 538, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]

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563 but also, as in the case of the Ukraine, because of the transfer of Poles and Hitler's extermination of the Jews.

Another important task resulting from the annexation of Western Byelorussia still remains to be carried out by the Government of the B.S.S.R. A large proportion of the Western Byelorussians have little or no Byelorussian national consciousness, and they speak some sort of
[197] local Slav dialect which they themselves do not identify as Byelorussian. This applies in particular to the population of Polesia where Polish statistics counted over 700,000 such 'local Slavs'. 'Greater Byelorussia' is now about to round off the formation of a Byelorussian nation by amalgamating the various brands of Byelorussians, not only formally in a purely administrative sense, but also politically and spiritually.

177.56 563 [795] This process, intended to effect the transformation of the Western Byelorussians into a full 'sovietized' people, has encountered considerable opposition, particularly among the Roman Catholics who had formed 20 per cent of the entire Byelorussian minority of the former North-Eastern Poland. The Roman Catholic Byelorussians had always most violently opposed the thesis of the 'brotherhood' between Byelorussians and Great Russians and their political organization under the Polish régime, the Christian Democratic Union, significantly called itself 'Byeloruthenian' instead of 'Byelorussian'.

● 186 Byelorussian opposition to the Soviet régime is dictated not only by economic and religious motives but also by national considerations. Although it has united Western and Eastern Byelorussia, the Soviet Government has offended Byelorussian nationalism by leaving the city of Vilna outside the Byelorussian 'State'. The Western Byelorussians looked upon Vilna as their national cultural centre and there may have been indeed a good case for including it in Byelorussia, but it was politically more expedient to make it the capital of Soviet Lithuania.

The difficulties which the Soviet régime had to face in post-war Byelorussia were not confined to the new western territories. The whole of Byelorussia had been occupied by the Germans for two to three years, and it was only natural that Soviet propaganda had to start in many respects right from the beginning when the Red Army re-entered Byelorussian territory. A statement by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party heralding the new propaganda campaign admitted indirectly that German Nazi propaganda had been successful among Byelorussians. The Communist Party organizations of Byelorussia were instructed in this statement to overcome 'the anti-collectivist and anti-state tendencies' with which the German occupants had indoctrinated the Byelorussian people.[35]

Many expressions of Byelorussian nationalism, however, existed quite independently of the moral consequences of German occupation. Judging by official Soviet admissions, Byelorussian nationalism, particularly

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in literature and the writing of history, has, despite its youth, a very tenacious life, and its strong emphasis on Byelorussia's ties with the West is one of its principal elements.

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113, .19 Belorussia RCl

[For information pertaining to the Belorussian languages, see 22: Matthews, Rl Soviet Union, category 116; pp. 117-118.]

668 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official
languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized
● 191 by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all
widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions
of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national
schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity
with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes
became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal
teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a
Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach,
who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and
activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists
and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers
use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal,
which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was
accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his
job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension
after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows
just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom
to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be
punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the
minorities.

563 Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in
[692] Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population.
In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact
groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for
the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
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Another important task resulting from the annexation of Western Byelorussia still remains to be carried out by the Government of the B.S.S.R. A large proportion of the Western Byelorussians have little or no Byelorussian national consciousness, and they speak some sort of [197] local Slav dialect which they themselves do not identify as Byelorussian. This applies in particular to the population of Polesia where Polish statistics counted over 700,000 such 'local Slavs'. 'Greater Byelorussia' is now about to round off the formation of a Byelorussian nation by amalgamating the various brands of Byelorussians, not only formally in a purely administrative sense, but also politically and spiritually.

177.56 563 [795] This process, intended to effect the transformation of the Western Byelorussians into a full 'sovietized' people, has encountered considerable opposition, particularly among the Roman Catholics who had formed 20 per cent of the entire Byelorussian minority of the former North-Eastern Poland. The Roman Catholic Byelorussians had always most violently opposed the thesis of the 'brotherhood' between Byelorussians and Great Russians and their political organization under the Polish régime, the Christian Democratic Union, significantly called itself 'Byeloruthenian' instead of 'Byelorussian'.

186 Byelorussian opposition to the Soviet régime is dictated not only by economic and religious motives but also by national considerations. Although it has united Western and Eastern Byelorussia, the Soviet Government has offended Byelorussian nationalism by leaving the city of Vilna outside the Byelorussian 'State'. The Western Byelorussians looked upon Vilna as their national cultural centre and there may have been indeed a good case for including it in Byelorussia, but it was politically more expedient to make it the capital of Soviet Lithuania.

The difficulties which the Soviet régime had to face in post-war Byelorussia were not confined to the new western territories. The whole of Byelorussia had been occupied by the Germans for two to three years, and it was only natural that Soviet propaganda had to start in many respects right from the beginning when the Red Army re-entered Byelorussian territory. A statement by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party heralding the new propaganda campaign admitted indirectly that German Nazi propaganda had been successful among Byelorussians. The Communist Party organizations of Byelorussia were instructed in this statement to overcome 'the anti-collectivist and anti-state tendencies' with which the German occupants had indoctrinated the Byelorussian people.[35]

Many expressions of Byelorussian nationalism, however, existed quite independently of the moral consequences of German occupation. Judging by official Soviet admissions, Byelorussian nationalism, particularly

871 on the basis of a full seven-year school. The system also planned to have technical schools opened with three-or four-year courses of study for the preparation of semi-qualified specialists. Professional and technical schools were based upon this seven-year system of general education and were the final link in the system of secondary education. The next level comprised institutions of higher education -- the universities and higher technical institutes. /8/ The night schools for adults were also adapted to the system of national education.

Periodicals and Cultural Activities

517 The many-sided cultural activity was a powerful stimulus for attracting the masses, particularly the youth. Youth was fired with the idea of a rebirth of the national culture.[1] The number of poets, writers, critics, scientific workers in history and geography, in the search for natural resources and in the studying of various kinds of problems grew tremendously in Belorussia. The Belorussian Academy of Sciences, the University, and the Agricultural Academy followed watchfully, occasionally challenging but always supporting the bold initiative of young innovators in literature, art, and research. The Belorussian State Publishing House did not refuse to publish the work of young poets and scholars, counting on their further development. The attentive attitude of national figures toward the young cadres inspired their efforts and distracted them from the often rather difficult living conditions.

● 204 The newspapers Zvezda /The Star/ and Sovetskaia Belorussia /Soviet Belorussia/ were printed in Minsk,[2] the first was considered a Party organ and the second an organ of the Soviet power. Local papers were also printed in the surrounding towns, and eventually each rayon had its own newspaper. Zvezda /The Star/ was considered the most influential although in reality its influence was determined largely by a certain fear of becoming an object of treatment on its pages. As it was a Party organ, Zvezda /The Star/ made pretensions to the infallibility and unimpeachibility of everything printed in it. It copied the general line of the Moscow Pravda and made every effort to imitate it. Newspapers were also printed in the Hebrew and in Polish. The popular literary-social magazine Polymia /The Flame/ Molodniak, /Youth/ Uzvysha /Upwards/. Polymia had an influence upon the formulation of a national

[1] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 116-Analyst]

204 consciousness as had Uzvysha upon the development of literature and art. Others were also published, and Molodniak was directed especially at youth. There were also departmental magazines, the organ of the Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. , As'veta /Education/ was well known.

545 A special topic should be devoted to the development of the theatrical art.[1] In any mention of the successful development of the Belorussian national theatres, the very old First Belorussian Theater in Minsk deserves attention. Up until 1930, it was original in its creative work. With very infrequent exceptions it gave translated plays. It promoted a series of talented artists. /9/ The second Belorussian Theater was organized out of studios. A special role must be assigned to the Belorussian Traveling Theater which was organized and directed by the enthusiast Vladislav Golubok. Golubok was a man of many talents. He wrote several plays based on Belorussian national life which ran for long periods, and were removed from the repertoire of the Traveling Theater when the general destruction of everything national in Belorussia began. The services of V. Golubok and his theater to the Belorussian nation are exceptionally great. During its existence it made tours not only of the cities but even of the most inaccessible villages and hamlets under conditions which, materially and otherwise, were most difficult. The productions of the Traveling Theater were in accordance with the tastes of the national masses, always being accompanied by folksongs, music, and fold dancing. V. L. Golubok was deservedly the first person in Belorussia to acquire the title of national artist. In 1937 he was arrested by the N. K. V. D. .

The Minsk Jewish Theater under the talented direction of Rafal'skii also enjoyed well-earned fame in Belorussia. It presented a series of plays on national themes. Among the Jews the play "Girsh Lekert" was particularly popular as it portrayed the hero, Girsh Lekert, of the revolutionary struggle in 1902 against the Tsarist government in Wilno.

814 The efforts of Belorussian and Jewish composers and collectors of folksongs, music, and folk dancing deserved particular attention. Their work at this time[1] was very opportune and is of colossal value. This aspect of the national folk culture had been neither investigated nor written down before the revolution . . . In ten or fifteen years, collectivization would have absorbed the beautiful national art of the Soviet, artifically created, 'chastushka, ' composed by obliging

[1] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category IIG - Analyst]

186 was being devoted to the life and work of Doctor Skarina. Portraits
661 of him were printed in large quantities, and they decorated the halls of learned and cultural institutions, schools, museums, etc. There was a large plaster figure of him in the vestibule of the Institute of Belorussian Culture which in 1928 was transferred to the Academy of Sciences. After the proscription of National-Democracy the statue of the learned doctor of the sixteenth century was thrown out. Even the little statues of Skariny were destroyed, and a similar fate attended the portraits and statuettes of the other national hero, the leader of the Belorussian insurgents, K. Kalinovskii.

In order to compromise the National-Democrats and their
●208 activities completely the new director of Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R., I. Gurskii, was ordered to have a play written with the appropriate content. Gurskii decided that he would write it himself and thus make his career. Not gifted with a dramaturgic abilities, he did not write a play but a worthless burlesque on people who had already seen the inside of G. P. U. cellars. Making use of his official position Gurskii compelled the First Theater to accept this talentless work for production. Enormous material resources were used in staging it, to the great detriment of the other theaters . . . However, neither material expenditures nor the director's efforts could help the play in the slightest. Gurskii portrayed the National-Democrats as drunkards and depraved elements. The attempt of the universally respected and talented poet, Ia. Kupala, to take his own life was depicted as the foolhardy escapade of a drunkard. After two or three performances, Gurskii's play, as obviously worthless, forced, and spurious, was withdrawn without any particular fuss, criticism, contrite admissions, or confessions of error on the part of the author . . . So the atempt to use the stage for persecuting the National-Democrats was for the present not crowned with success. From Soviet newspapers it has been ascertained that I.Gurskii recently "responded" with two plays on post-war kolkhoz life: Khleb /Bread / Svoi Liudi /One's Own People/. They met the same fate as his "response" of twenty-two years ago. /34/ They were panned by the critics and did not even get to the stage.

Simultaneously with the arrest of the National-Democrats
661 all of their writings were withdrawn from libraries, reading rooms, and general circulation, independently of whether or not they had any connection with the charges brought against the prisoners.

[1] [People's commissariat of Public Education-Analyst]

according to the reports of the newspapers, preparation and delivery [346] of fuel for schools had not started even in August, shortly before the 871 beginning of the school year.

The success of training in schools is also conditioned by prompt and sufficient provision of students with textbooks, instruments, writing accessories, well equipped and completed physical, chemical and biological school laboratories and libraries. Several Soviet organizations, independent of each other, are engaged in providing students with textbooks in the BSSR. For this reason the textbooks, instruments and writing acessories have to travel a long way before they reach school shelves or bookstores.

"Books are left lying for a long time at the editor's and proof- [214] reader's in the publishing house, they are held up even at the typesetter's. Almost-finished products lie for two and more months at the sewing and binding establishments. All this means that the established norm for the work on textbooks is not fullfilled from one month to another... A considerable number of textbooks is held up because of the shortage of maps and the unsatisfactory organization of the productive process of publication and typography. Books concerned with methodology are being published particularly slowly: Out of 46 such titles which were planned, only 5 have been printed." (Zviazda of May 21st, current year).

Colossal sums are being expended for the printing of various propaganda material, as well as publications designed for foreign countries. This material is made up with special care and luxury. The appearance of the textbooks designed for Soviet schoolchildren is quite different.

"Textbooks are printed on poor paper, covers are smeared with printer's ink. The work of the sewing and binding divisions of the printing press is of a particularly low quality. Many books, even if they are most carefully treated, soon break and fall apart." (Zviazda, April 25th of this year). /72/

The most indispensable tools and products are absent from the school laboratories. The laboratories of provincial and country schools are especially poor. The teaching of physics, chemistry and natural sciences is reduced to a study without experiments and examples. The situation of the school libraries is no better: they are mostly oversupplied with Soviet political literature, while the classics are unavailable. School furniture consists of an assortment of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

7: Krushinsky - 5 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

668 The People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belo-
214 russia /Narkompros/ became the headquarters of activity. Here follows a short schematic description of the most important measures taken up until 1930. The Narkompros took measures to have the instruction in all schools translated into the native language. This was difficult work since the schools did not have textbooks in the native language, the lack of elementary readers in the primary schools being a particularly difficult obstacle to overcome. However in a comparatively short period old and experienced teachers compiled some elementary readers modeled upon the literary styles of Belorussian writers, and a famous Belorussian linguist compiled a school grammar of the native language (1).

1. Ia. Lesik compiled a school textbook of the Belorussian language; the first normative grammar of Belorussian on a scientific basis, adapted simultaneously for use in schools had been issued in 1918 by the Belorussian philologist, V. Tarashkevich, long before Lesik.

The majority of the presses in Belorussia had been destroyed during the war and in any case, they were not suitable for mass publication of textbooks. During the course of a year some textbooks were printed in Germany and a few in Wilno under the direction of the well known writer D. Zhilunovich who was a member of the collegium of Narkampros. He subsequently reorganized the publishing business and the presses in Minsk. With contemporary techniques, the work which he accomplished would not seem to be very great, but in those times, against a background of general devastation, it was quite an accomplishment.

871 Normal schools were opened in Minsk and a number of
666 other cities. The one in Minsk played a particularly positive role. It was staffed with the best teachers, and during the twenties was named after Professor Ignatovskii. The education in these normal schools was directed toward the preparation of teachers who were also politically active nationalists. Their graduates subsequently devoted themselves, with great success, to the cultural rebirth of their nation. /5/ Many of them finished universities, and out of the former pupils of the Minsk normal school there developed a number of talented poets and writers. To fill the great lack of teachers of

661/Afterwards he put a lot of work into organizing the Institute of Belorussian Culture and later was President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In Odessa on January 13, 1919, Nekrashevich was careless enough to greet the French general, Bartel, in the name of the Belorussians. This became known in Minsk and when the National-Democrats were being dispersed, S. Ia. Vol'fson in his work against them, Ideologiia i Metodologiia Natsdemovshchiny, /The Ideology and Methodology of the National-Democrats/ wrote, "S. Nekrashevich welcomed General Bartel in Odessa, 'On behalf of the National Center of Belorussia, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the South of Russia, who bring us not only the hope but, I would say, the guarantee of a speedy liberation from the oppressions of the Bolsheviks who for more than fifteen months have been devastating our country' ... Nekrashevich begged General Bartel for armed assistance." (pages 69-70)

Belorussia became Soviet; Belorussians and Odessites, returned to Minsk, and the majority of them held responsible positions. The welcome Nekrashevich had extended to General Bartel was not forgotten, however, but was unearthed from the archives and figured on every occasion as a shining example of the political untrustworthiness not only of himself but of the whole group of "Odessites." The calculations of the Belorussians were not justified. His appointment to Gomel' did not save him from the G.P.U. He was arrested before he even started work there, condemned, and sentenced to work out his term of punishment on Medvezh'ja Gora near the construction of the White Sea Canal. Evidently Balitskii died there since we have no more information about him. His wife's death was also tragic. Being a doctor of medicine she was not arrested but later went insane.

Zhilunovich and the "Nats-Dems" /24/

● 214 668 The Belorussian State Publishing House played a prominent role in the national work. It was the only institution of this kind in Belorussia and issued all printed matter with the exception, of course, of newspapers and periodicals. This publishing house also regulated the priority of everything else published. It was headed by the outstanding Belorussian writer and politician of the older generation, Dimitrii
668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartny).

7: Krushinsky - 39 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

626 661 Some particularly timid institutional directors hastened to repaint their offices so as to cover the Belorussian ornamentation. /35/

It cannot be asserted that this "purge" of everything national in Belorussia, which so often led to absurdities, was carried out as a result ofspecial directives. It was just that the new leaders, particularly those who were above suspicion with regard to the national work, hastened to insure themselves against any unexpected troubles.

626 217 There was total havoc in the Belorussian State Museum. Everything was radically rearranged, there were changes in the plans of the work, and all the museum's activity was subjected to merciless criticism. The brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising L. Bobrovich, I. Shpilevskii, M. Grinblat, A. Levdanskii, in its "exposure" Etnografiia muzeinoe delo /Ethnography in the Museums/ wrote, "The National-Democrats chose ethnography as one of their basic objectives. Ethnography gives wide scope to the primary aims of the Nats-Dems . . . The ethnographic interest of the National-Democratic scholars was an adjunct to their politics." (page 151). The very purposes of museums were revised -- mass-cultural work among the broad masses of laborers was demanded from them, on socialist construction and class warfare. "First of all it is interesting to note how the Belorussian National-Democrats approach the role of a museum as such. The principle task of a museum is to collect, safeguard, and study objects of archeological, historical, ethnographic, and artistic interest which pertain to Belorussia (Kharlampovich-- Piatigodie Belorusskogo Gosudarstvennogo Muzeia /The Fifth Anniversary of the Belorussian State Museum"/ Nash Krai /Our Country/, No. 1, 1927, page 10). This is an old bourgeois proposition. Is a museum only a collection of interesting things? Is it only a curio cabinet? Is there not even any difference between a Soviet museum and the reactionary ones developed by students of local lore in the good old days?" (page 204), proclaimed the brigade of the Academy of Sciences. Museums were particularly blamed for not carrying on anti-religious activity but on the contrary collecting everything of value from the Catholic and Orthodox churches and the synogogues and preserving it lovingly. As a result of this reproof the museums changed completely. Everything reminiscent of the national essence of Belorussia vanished from the displays.

661 The Belorussian national movement was also charged with aiming to preserve religious feelings among the population and with

185 433 grain crop amounted to 119 million tons, and the target for 1950 is set at 127 million metric tons. Production of potatoes in Byelorussia is to increase by 6 per cent., and of flax by 31 percent.

Fishing

226 Before the war fishing was an important source of food supply in Byelorussia, where the many inland lakes and streams abound in pike, perch, bass, sandre, bream, and other fresh-water fish. Osweia Lake, a body of water about 3,500 acres in extent, produced some 500 tons of fish annually, when 50 men were engaged in year-round fishing. At that time the fishing collective at the lake employed nets measuring almost a mile in overall length; but today very little fishing is being done for lack of nets and other equiptment. Osweia is not an isolated example.

[127] An extensive system of fish culture, including the stocking of fish and the addition of chemical fertilizers to assist plant growth in the lakes, was destroyed during the war. The Germans depleted available fish resources by discharging explosives under water to bring the stunned fish to the surface. Many young fish were exterminated by this method of explosive fishing, without regard to conservation. At present the system of fish culture in Byelorussia is being slowly reinstituted, but is handicapped by the lack of nets. UNRRA shipments of fishing gear have, however, contributed valuable assistance in this regard.

The new Five Year Plan provides that "by 1948, pond culture will be restored to pre-war proportions."

The fish catch in 1950 is expected to be 5,200 tons.

727 231 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared, and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 241 433 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with woods and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

060 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in The war period from June 1941 to The Summer of 1944--Analyst]

Livestock

231 Livestock production in 1946 was still less than a fourth of pre-war, and it was estimated that five years were necessary to restore it fully. Cattle numbers in May 1946 were reckoned by the UNRRA Mission at 30 to 35 per cent. of pre-war; pigs at 10 per cent., and sheep and goats at 25 per cent. Horses, although about 40 per cent. of the pre-war numbers, represented only about 25 per cent. of pre-war horsepower, because of age and small size.

One must bear in mind that these figures include not only the surviving livestock, but also gifts from other parts of the Soviet Union. Since the liberation, tens of thousands of cattle have been sent to Byelorussia by other Republics.

The pre-war numbers of livestock in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia, and the Soviet Union are shown in the table below.

TABLE VI

Pre-War Livestock Numbers in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia and the U.S.S.R.

	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic		Western Byelorussia	Entire Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1938	1934	1938
Horses	n.a.	700,000[1]	779,000	15,400,000	16,200,000
Cows	962,800	1,027,200	1,306,000	33,500,000	50,900,000
Other cattle	391,900	878,100	631,000		
Pigs	1,054,400	1,951,000	1,555,000	11,500,000	25,700,000
Sheep and goats	896,700	1,077,300	1,684,000	36,500,000	66,600,000

[1] The 1935 figure

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; and Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941.

In this table it is interesting to note that although in Western Byelorussia before 1939 there was almost no mechanization of agriculture, the number of horses claimed is only 9,000 more than in the Byelorussian Republic (approximately the same area) where tractors and other machines did 85 to 87 per cent. of the farm work.

433 As a result of the wartime decrease of livestock and of agricultural products, the production of fats and oils in the B.S.S.R. during 1946 was estimated to be only about 15 to 20 per cent. of pre-war. Before the war the principal sources of edible fats were lard and butter. Consumption averaged about 22 to 25 kilograms per head. The return of an adequate

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 The Five Year Plan , 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries,
231 and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.

661 Professor Ignatovskii was widely known and very popular for his prominent activities. In those days the G. P. U. did not yet dare to throw him in a cellar and make short work of him. As a result of his suicide there were persistent rumors that the G. P. U. had succeeded in getting Professor Ignatoviskii to name those members of the national movement who had taken upon themselves to check the Soviet regime in Belorussia and establish a democratic system. The professor preferred death, but even before his suicide the movement had been dealt a telling blow by the arrest of the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R., Dimitrii Prishchepov. Himself a son of the people and a former teacher he was well able to understand the age long striving of the Belorussian peasant for a private farm of his own. He knew the reasons for the backwardness, poverty, and need 241 of the countryside. Before collectivization, his[1] activities had been 423 directed toward strengthening the private working peasant's position 661 by building them homesteads which were generally grouped in small hamlets but frequently isolated. This arrangement gave the peasant wide scope for his own initiative, and he could also draw on state agricultural assistance. /21/ This tendency in the work of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture turned out to be in complete contradiction to the Kremlin's avowed policy of collectivizing agriculture, and besides, an unheard of tempo of collectivization was demanded, with the country's total efforts directed at the destruction of the private peasants' farmstead to be replaced by the other, so-called socialist, form of agriculture. The most prosperous farms were ruined completely and their proprietors assigned to the outlawed category of kulaks -- then they were carted away under inhuman conditions and sent out to the most godforsaken and uninhabited regions of Siberia. The peasants who still remained unsubdued were tagged as podkulachnik' and subjected to public persecution and economic pressure in the form of a high head tax -- in spite of the fact that these peasants were the ones who had most of the diplomas and certificates which the Soviet government had given out for high showings in animal husbandry, gardening, truck 661 farming, etc. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture had to play first violin in this destruction -- in other words it had to destroy

[1] [D. Prishchepov, Peoples Commissar of Agriculture to 1930 - Analyst]

438 433 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern factories arose. The timber industry was modernised and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

433 ● 241 474 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

[728] In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

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[1] [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Analyst]

II AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND FISHING

Before the war Byelorussia was one of the largest flax and potato-growing areas in the Soviet Union. In 1937, two years before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia, there were 255,000 hectares sown to flax and 631,000 hectares sown to potatoes in the B.S.S.R. The chief food crop produced in this Republic was grain (rye, wheat, oats, and barley), which occupied about 60 per cent. of the total area sown. In 1937 2,243,500 hectares were planted in grain, including 242,500 hectares of wheat, which before 1917 was produced on a very small scale.

The following table shows the area of the principal crops in the Byelorussian Republic in 1932 and 1937, compared with cultivated areas in the Soviet Union as a whole.

TABLE III

Byelorussian S.S.R.: Area of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
(thousand hectares)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	111	242.5	34,500	41,300
Rye	1,313	n.a.	25,800	22,700
Oats	613	"	15,400	17,600
All grain total	2,627	2,243.5	99,700	104,400
Potatoes	619	631	6,100	6,900
Flax and hemp	279	255	2,500[1]	2,125[1]
Orchards and gardens	76	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total area under crop	3,983	3,514	134,400	135,300

[1] Flax only.

Note: n.a. means not available.

Sources: Development of the Soviet Economy, Moscow, 1940; Second Five Year Plan, Vol. II, Moscow, 1934; Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939; and Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939.

From 1932 to 1937, as the table shows, there was a decrease of 468,000 hectares in the area under cultivation in the B.S.S.R. Average yields of all crops, however, had been increased to a great extent, so that total production was raised by several million tons.

TABLE IV

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Byelorussian S.S.R.: Production of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
(thousand metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	77.4	202.6	20,310.0	46,860.0
Other grain	1,616.3	1,618.3	49,480.0	73,430.0
Total grain	1,693.7	1,820.9	69,790.0	120,290.0
Potatoes	5,061.0	7,005.6	43,070.0	65,630.0
Flax	57.4	71.4	500.0	n.a.

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939; and Socialist Agriculture, Moscow, 1939.

Since the natural fertility of Byelorussian soil is not very high, improvements in the yields of various crops depend greatly on efficient cultivation, particularly on generous fertilizing, and other modern measures (including mechanization) which were widely applied on the farms of the U.S.S.R. during the collectivization of agriculture.

Collective Farms (Kolkhozes)

474 The greatest agricultural problems of the Soviet Union have been to increase the area under cultivation, to improve the methods of production, to raise yields per hectare as well as total production, and from this increased production, to insure that adequate supplies of food reach the towns and factories. The primary means of achieving these aims was the organization of individual farmers into collectives (kolkhozes), in which they could jointly maintain their livestock and work the land, using the most scientific methods of livestock breeding, soil cultivation, crop rotation and fertilizing, but above all, increasing the use of farm machinery. In the long run mechanization, with the replacement of horses by tractors, makes a greater area available for grain and other agricultural products such as potatoes and flax.

475 An outstanding feature of these new developments was the establishment of machine and tractor stations (M.T.S.), in which the government concentrated thousands of tractors, threshers, combines, and other large machines. The M.T.S., which had their own workshops and staffs of mechanics, carried out all the mechanized farm work for the collectives - ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. - in return for which they received fixed fees, payable in agricultural produce.

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

727 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated
231 more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three
million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the
woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been
either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by
the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared,
and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were
neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined
● 241 to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had
sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers
433 and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of
cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per
cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been
completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of
Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with weeds and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

080 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in The war period from June 1941 to The summer of 1944--Analyst]

474 727 The farmers had hidden their ploughs, harrows, and small implements so that these were available with which to begin farming again in 1944; but all the heavy equipment was lost. Livestock losses amounted to 500 cattle, 125 horses, approximately 1,000 pigs, and about 800 sheep and goats. The peasants had taken their horses into the forests, and of those, 40 were brought back at liberation. These 40 horses and four cows were the sum total of livestock on hand at liberation.

In 1944, owing to the lateness of the season and to lack of implements, seeds and livestock, the farmers were able to sow only a very small part of their land. Most of the area brought into cultivation that first year had to be spaded by hand, because there was no draught power. In 1945 the farmers succeeded in bringing half of their their cropland under cultivation, still substituting hand spading for ploughing to a considerable extent.

As stated earlier, the area of this collective is 1,500 hectares. About 200 lectares are in meadows, 69 hectares in woods, and 421 hectares in pastures, gullies, and roads. The pre-war crop area was 810 hectares, and in 1946, this had been largely restored, except for hops, but not the pre-war yields. The following table shows the areas of cultivation in 1945 and 1946.

TABLE V

● 241 474 Lenin Collective Farm, Minsk Raion, Byelorussian S.S.R.: Crop Areas in 1945 and 1946 (in hectares)

Grain	1945		1946	
Oats	125		155	
Barley	75		75	
Wheat	25		19	
Winter rye	nil		186	
Winter wheat	"		8.5	
Buckwheat	10		8	
Total grain		235		451.5
Potatoes	100		94	
Vegetables	20		14	
Lupin (sown with rye)	nil		(83)	
Lupin (for seed)	10		9	
Clover	nil		90	
Hops	"		2[1]	
Total area sown		365		660
Fallow		445		150
Total cropland		810		810

[1] Pre-war area of hopyard, 4.5 hectares

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

474 Special mention should be made of the hopyard, which before the war was a very profitable enterprise, bringing in a gross income of 65,000 roubles in 1940. The hops died out during the war and were replanted in 1946; they are expected to produce a marketable crop this year (1947).

433 241 474 Productivity of the Lenin collective farm[1] in 1946 was down to 40 per cent. below pre-war yields. The grain yield was 1.0 to 1.2 metric tons per hectare, compared with yields of 1.6 to 1.8 tons per hectare before the war. The potato crop was only 8 tons per hectare, half the pre-war yield of 16 tons, because the farm had unusually bad luck with potatoes in 1946, several fields being washed out completely.

The extreme decline is attributed to shortages of artificial fertilizers, formerly used in large amounts; the shortage of manure, resulting from the greatly diminished livestock herds; and the lack of machinery and manpower.

Ploughing is shallower than before the war; and seed bed preparation, less careful. The farmers realize that their ploughing and seed bed preparation are below the standards of good farm practice, but they are unable to do better until they get more tractors, implements, and horses. Before the war this farm customarily hired three or four tractors from the M.T.S.; in 1946 it was able to secure only one. Only 86 horses were available in 1946, and these on the average were smaller than before the war, and could not be fed as well. However, productivity in 1946 was greater than in the preceding year, chiefly because the farm had more men, more horses, and more equipment.

The Extent of the Post-War Recovery

433 241 In the Byelorussian Republic as a whole the crop year 1945 was the first full year of reoccupation by Byelorussians. By 1946 agricultural production had made definite progress toward supplying the population with food. The sown area in 1946 reached 76 per cent. of pre-war, but the level of yields was depressed by inadequate soil preparation, shortages of fertilizers, and unfavourable weather. As a result the grain crop, although better than in 1945, was still only half of pre-war. The vegetable crop, grown largely from UNRRA seeds, was from 75 to 80 per cent. of pre-war in total production; while the potato crop, because rainfall was heavy during part of the growing season and because plantings were only 60 per cent. of pre-war, reached less than half pre-war in total output.

Seed Production

433 246 The inadequacy of seed supplies has been a serious hindrance to full recovery of the pre-war area of cultivation. Particularly short were vegetable seeds (except potatoes), clovers, vetch, and timothy and other grasses, most of which are biennials or perennials requiring two years for the production of seed. There is also a shortage of flax seed;

[1] [See cat 116, pp 15-16 - Analyst]

648 742 Apart from the penicillin plant, other big items in the UNRRA medical programme include electrocardiographs, X-ray machines and film, and artificiallimb manufacturing equipment. Drug requirements have involved the procurement of quinine and, as a substitute, atabrine. By the end of January 1947, slightly less than one metric ton of atabrine had been shipped.

743 648 Not the least of UNRRA's contribution to Byelorussian health has been the soap supplies furnished. In 1946 the only soap available in the hospitals and sanitoria (and this means generally the only soap available anywhere), came from UNRRA sources. This was also true of a large part of the diet of patients, which came from UNRRA food supplies; and of blankets and bedding, which were distributed to hospitals and children's homes.

Still among the urgent requirements in Byelorussian hospitals are beds and bedding, laboratory equipment - including more X-ray machines, microscopes, stains and medea, drugs, and lamps - furniture, kitchen equipment, food, and soap.

Agricultural Rehabilitation Supplies

648 241 UNRRA agricultural rehabilitation supplies began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in February 1946 and consisted almost entirely of seeds. At the end of July the Byelorussian Government acknowledged receipt of 5,300 tons of vegetable and other seeds, which were estimated to be sufficient for planting from half a million to 600,000 hectares; and since favourable weather permitted late sowing, less than a thousand tons had to be held over for use in 1947. On all the farms visited by the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, the vegetable, clover, vetch, timothy and other grass crops had been started fron UNRRA seed.

Besides seeds - an important contribution toward increased food supplies - UNRRA has shipped fishing equipment, food processing equipment, and farm machinery - chiefly tractors. Deliveries of the latter, however, were heartbreakingly slow; and it was only in December 1946 that the first 221 UNRRA tractors arrived. The difficulty of procuring tractors has been one of the greatest obstacles to farm recovery in Byelorussia. The Mission estimated that had UNRRA tractors been available before August 1946, grain cultivation and production would have increased by 500 hectares and 500 tons for each tractor delivered.

Altogether, UNRRA plans to furnish over 800 tractors to the B.S.S.R.

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Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies

Shipments of industrial supplies up to January 31, 1947, amounted to 14,495 gross long tons valued at 10,081,000 dollars. Largest items were public utilities equipment (power generators, pipe for gas and water mains, etc.) and raw materials, chemicals and engineering stores. The following table shows the shipments by value as well as by tonnage.

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[1] [See cat 116, pp. 15-16 - Analyst]

433 246 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

433 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertilizer available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any

TABLE I

War Destruction of Byelorussian Towns

	Population		Estimated percentage destruction
	1939	June 1946	
Minsk	238,772		80
Vitebsk	167,424	62,000	90 - 93
Gomel	144,169		80
Orsha	62,000[1]	34,000	80
Polotsk	30,000[1]	24,000	96
Borisov	88,000[1]	43,000	50

1 Population in 1940, according to UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Sources: Statement by Mr. Ivan Tinchuk, UNRRA Member for the B.S.S.R., August 1945; and UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

According to the indictment of the Minsk trial of German war criminals, 1,136 hospitals, clinics and first aid centres were destroyed during the occupation. The civilian population received no medical services from the Germans during the war and the incidence of various diseases increased enormously. There was also a drastic increase in infant mortality.

Byelorussian industry has been systematically reduced to rubble. Everywhere the pattern of destruction was the same. Enterprises had been stripped of machinery, and the buildings burned or blown up. Stationary equipment was destroyed or rendered useless.

Agriculture and livestock breeding suffered equally. Millions of farm animals were slaughtered or taken to Germany. Ten thousand collective and state farms were plundered. From machine and tractor stations alone, 8,996 tractors and 1,105 combine harvesters were removed and taken to Germany. (By comparing these losses with the immediate pre-war numbers of 12,000 tractors and 1,600 combines, it can be seen what German occupation meant to mechanized farming in this Republic.)

The destruction of agriculture had severe consequences on the food situation. In May 1945 the Chief of the UNRRA Supplies Department in the Byelorussian Government stated that, while there was no actual [262] starvation, there was serious undernourishment in many areas. UNRRA Mission observers reported that at that time the large majority of the people had little to eat beyond bread, potatoes and UNRRA food. The shortage of fats and oils was particularly acute; in the spring of 1945 the daily fat ration in children's homes was only 20 grams, compared with 100 grams before the war.

727 648 the full tasks of rebuilding homes, restarting industry, and working their farms once more. Therefore, in the summer of 1945 the Soviet Government applied to UNRRA for such assistance and strongly urged that 700 million U.S. dollars be allocated by the Administration for relief work in these two Republics. In August 1945 the Ukraine and Byelorussia were admitted to membership in UNRRA; and on December 18, 1945, after it was determined that they were not in a position to pay with foreign exchange for their own import requirements, agreements were signed between their governments and the Administration providing for the delivery of relief and rehabilitation supplies amounting to 250 million dollars - little more than one-third of the amount requested.

The UNRRA agreement with Byelorussia provided that 61 million dollars would be used to ship food, clothing, medical, agricultural, and industrial supplies to the B.S.S.R. The agreement also stipulated that UNRRA would attempt to deliver the bulk of these supplies to Byelorussia before June 30, 1946; however, because of procurement and transport difficulties, this proved impossible. On May 30, 1946, therefore, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of 1946.

On April 19, 1946, a small UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia and established headquarters at Minsk. The duties of the Mission were to handle problems connected with the delivery of UNRRA supplies, to work closely with the Byelorussian Government in ascertaining the needs of the people, and to observe the distribution of UNRRA supplies. As in all UNRRA countries, the Mission members have complete freedom of movement and observation.

Before the arrival of the Mission at Minsk, 29 ships carrying UNRRA cargoes had already landed at Soviet ports (from December 1945, when UNRRA shipments started, up to April 23, 1946). The Byelorussian Government estimated the tonnage received at 67,680 gross long tons, of which 58,000 tons were food; 3,939 tons, seeds; 3,905 tons, industrial materials; and 1,512 tons were clothing, soap, leather, tarpaulins, and rope. The government also reported that they had taken from the ports and distributed all but 22,000 tons of the supplies received by that time.

Members of the UNRRA Mission making initial observations reported efficient and equitable distribution of the supplies to those sections of the population which suffered most from the war. Practical use was being made of every scrap of material, and there was no evidence of waste. As at April 23, 1946, 40,000 gross long tons of food had been distributed among 12 regions and eight individual towns in Byelorussia. Eleven locomotives had been distributed to nine different points; industrial metals - copper, aluminium, and zinc - had been distributed in six of the war destroyed cities; and over 1,000 tons of seeds, to seven regions of the Republic.

648 262 It was in food supplies that UNRRA was making its greatest contribution. In all the shops, UNRRA food constituted the bulk of the supplies; and apart from bread, cereals, and potatoes, over 90 per cent.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

727 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a
185 series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power,

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

V OUTLOOK IN 1947

146 Although there has been no starvation in the B.S.S.R., almost everyone is undernourished. There is still an acute shortage of fats and oils, meat, milk, and sugar. Such of these foods as were available in 1946 were chiefly from UNRRA; and now that UNRRA food shipments have ceased, there will undoubtedly be privation. The shortage of fats and oils will continue until domestic livestock herds are fattened and replenished; in the meantime, only external help will alleviate the scarcity.

262 Much depends on a good harvest this year. Last December the B.S.S.R. Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Krupenya, in a conference with the UNRRA Mission, stressed the importance of increased food production in 1947 - more seeds, more tractors, more farm workers. A part of the interview is reproduced below. Mr. Waller is Chief of the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Mr. Waller: "In our observations we have seen villages where there was such devastation that the people...had to be helped with food this year. Will the same need exist next year?"

Mr. Krupenya: "In some areas it will not be possible to cover the local needs from the produce of the local farms. The population of extremely devastated areas will stand in need of assistance...The government is making plans to assist them."

Mr. Waller: "What per cent. or number of the village people will need assistance?"

Mr. Krupenya: "It is hard to say exactly, but at least ten to fifteen per cent. of the rural population in Byelorussia..."

Mr. Waller: "Will there be starvation (in the B.S.S.R.) if no aid from outside is forthcoming?"

Mr. Krupenya: "Conditions will be difficult, and aid from outside the Republic will be necessary...Every effort will be made to keep the people from starving."

Mr. Waller: "If no other aid is received from outside, and without further UNRRA assistance, will there be any danger of starvation?"

262 Mr. Krupenya: "The need is so great that some aid will be given...by other Soviet Republics. The increased work on restoration planned for next year will impose additional burdens..." He then added: "The situation is hard after the war. The help received from UNRRA has been great, but after such devastation as was inflicted on Byelorussia, one cannot expect to have appreciable results in one or two years. The time is too short. The results of rehabilitation work done now will be felt later. The situation is still grave this year, and especially so in the villages which suffered most. It cannot be said that there will not be malnutrition. Certain people will not have enough food. There will still be people who do not get enough to eat."

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

316
433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

● 288
433
185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from
restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
433 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet
185 production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15
per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced
under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in
433 1950 is expected to be as follows:

185

Shoes	7 million pairs
Hosiery	13.5 " "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000 units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000 "

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were
almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from
UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme,
has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when
UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk,
facilities were estimated to be as follows.

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or 6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons, or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the
U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans
systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had
eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were
then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the
U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced.
During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the
remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946,
when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had
one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many
processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which
are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing,
without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a
few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present
operations are carried out in the single building which has been
restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the
match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in
operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a
year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this
output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and
additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
372 pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

THE NAME "WHITE RUSSIA"[1]

NICHOLAS P. VAKAR

103 THE TERM Belorussia[2] is not well known outside the Slavic world. The area is more frequently referred to as "White Russia." Since 1917, however, use of the latter term has become a source of confusion. The Russians who fought against the Reds in the Civil War of 1918–20 were also called "White Russians." Although in Russian the term *Belorussy*, the ethnic group, and *Belye Russkie*, the political group, are easily distinguishable, there is no way of making the distinction clear in literal translation into English. Many people still cannot understand how an anti-Soviet group succeeded in organizing a republic within the Soviet Union, and why its members are called "white" after they have turned "red." In view of the general confusion, it is perhaps time to suggest that when referring to the ethnic group, the term Belorussian replace the term "White Russian" in our libraries, documents and literature.

The question is: When and why were these lands and people first called "white"?

There is no written evidence that the term White Russia (*Belaja Rus'*, *Alba Russia*) was used before 1382 (Karamzin). At that time, and probably some time before, it was known among the Poles, Livonians, Prussians, and perhaps other Germans (Lamanskij). It designated at least part, if not the whole, of present Belorussia which was at that time a part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

The origin and meaning of the word "white" as applied to this particular part of the country have been the subject of considerable
● [291] dispute. Some historians believe the term to have originated from the white clothing, smock, leggings, and homespun overcoat, which the people of this region have worn since time immemorial (Herberstein, Leroy-Beaulieu). Others attribute it to the deep snow which covers the country from October to April, and suggest that the people wore white clothes "because their country was called white" (Tatiščev).
[142] Still others find the explanation in the light complexions of the people: fair skin, blond hair, and pale blue eyes (Karskij). The theory which connects the name with the white clothing of the people has apparently been officially adopted in the B. S. S. R. At least Kuzma

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[1] The research basic to this paper was partially supported by a grant from the Russian Research Center of Harvard University.

[2] The spelling *Byelorussia* is preferred by some translators of Soviet literature into English. The author, however, feels that the spelling *Belorussia* is adequate. The use of *y* as a vowel softener in the middle of a word is more likely to confuse the English speaking reader than to aid in pronunciation.

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facilities were estimated to be as follows.

648 UNRRA clothing and contributed clothing are distributed free. The local soviet in each instance prepares a list of persons eligible to receive such clothing. Otherwise, textiles and shoe leather supplied to Byelorussia under the UNRRA programme are converted into clothing and shoes at local co-operatives, or artels, which perform an important role in the production of consumers' goods in the Republic.

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295 Typical of the producer co-operatives engaged in processing UNRRA-supplied textiles in the Novy Put Clothing Artel in Minsk which UNRRA Mission observers visited in November 1946. At this artel, garments were being made for war orphans cared for in children's homes. The finished garments were then distributed free of charge to the children, the government paying the artel for the cost of manufacture only.

Orders for the manufacture of clothing at this artel can be placed by organizations or by individuals; and as a general rule, the customer supplies his own materials and pays the artel only the established production cost. On orders placed by individuals, the production prices are, for a child's winter coat, 75 roubles,[1] for a woman's winter coat, 275 roubles, and for a man's winter coat, 250 roubles. Men's jackets are manufactured for 85 roubles, and trousers, for 45. Orders placed by organizations or wholesale outlets receive a 20 per cent. reduction on this scale.

The artel is organized on a co-operative profit-sharing basis. Its members are the workers employed in its shops and offices. In addition to their share in the artel's annual income, the member-workers are also paid regular wages for work performed. The monthly earnings of the employees in this artel were said to average 500 roubles. Earnings as high as 2,000 roubles a month were cited for cutters, but the majority of skilled workers earn from 600 to 1,200 roubles montly.

The artel "Novy Put" was first organized in 1928, during the first Five Year Plan. Before the German invasion in 1941, it had a membership of 400 workers, and in addition to the main establishment, it had four branches in various districts of Minsk. The membership, composed largely of Jews, suffered a very high casualty rate during the war; 90 per cent. were said to have perished at the hand of the Germans. In July 1944, shortly after the liberation of Minsk, the artel was reorganized; and it has been steadily growing both in membership and in output. By July 1, 1946, it had 110 workers.

The shoe artels are organized along the same general pattern as the clothing artels. In November 1946 the Red Shoemaker artel in Minsk was turning out a thousand pairs of workers' shoes and three thousand pairs of children's shoes per month.[2] The present membership

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[1] 5.40 roubles equal one U.S. dollar; 21.36 roubles equal one pound sterling.

[2] UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population, as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped. The largest single item of the
742 medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

423 the land was hereditary property, which had the positive results of continual and steady use of the land and the negative one of constant subdivision of the peasant holdings in the country. The Bolshevik uprising did not bring about any significant improvements in the life of the small holders as sovkhozes and kolkhozes were organized on the large estates. Up until 1930, D. Prishchepov, a former Socialist-Revolutionary, was the head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture. He had managed to live abroad and become acquainted with agricultural conditions in Denmark and Germany. Upon his return to Belorussia he contemplated a series of measures which he considered the more useful since they were in accordance with the desires of the great mass of the Belorussian peasantry. So as to increase the land fund and distribute it among those who had little or none, Prishchepov managed to abolish a part, although an insignificant one, of the Soviet farms and also to bring about significant reductions in the land belonging to these establishments. As the basic unit of land to be used, Prishchepov chose the small village of ten to twenty peasant farms, with comfortable farmsteads of up to one hectare in size. /11/

[311] Even in those times it cost him[1] a great effort to prove the advantage of the small village over the large one as a method of land exploitation. The necessity of rapid reconstruction of the system of land tenure in Belorussia was obvious. In the first place there was the question of what to do with the reserve land which had been given for temporary use to the landless peasants and those with small holdings. Then, it was proposed to apportion crowded and disorganized large villages among small ones.. Part of the peasantry wanted small separate farms under the new system, but Prishchepov could not officially establish separate farmsteads. In practice it happened as an exception that, when lands were being distributed in the woods, separate farms were cut out as well as small villages. . . 668 To placate the theoreticians, Prishchepov[1] had to assure them that it was very easy to make the transformation from a small village to an agricultural commune. Prishchepov knew quite well how absurd these assurances were, but being one of the leaders of the national movement he was guided by the interests of the country and not by the presuppositions of the 654 Communists which at the time were both unclear and confused. In addition to increasing agricultural assistance Prishchepov[1] introduced a series of measures designed to encourage improvements on the holdings of independent peasants. Various types of agricultural exibition

[1] [D. Prishchepov, head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture, beginning about 1920 to 1930 - Analyst]

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

433 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre
for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then
246 further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the
diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

433 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertiliser available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any

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433 Compared with 1940, the capacity of Byelorussian electric power stations in 1950 is to increase by 220 per cent.; peat production is to rise 127 per cent. above the 1940 output; the output of bricks and lime is to increase fourfold; and the production of tile is slated to be about nine times over 1940.

Among the twelve oblasts in the Republic, Minsk oblast is scheduled for the greatest industrial expansion. In the construction programme are new factories for the output of cloth, penicillin, Deft-ware, porcelain, peat briquettes, boilers, radiators, instruments, bicycles, motor trucks, and tractors. The 1950 output for the last three factories is to be 100,000 bicycles, 1,000 7-ton trucks and 5,000 tractors. In the city and environs of Minsk alone capital investments are scheduled at the rate of nearly one million roubles a day during the course of the five years.

Another area in which large developments are projected is Gomel oblast, which in 1950 is to produce 787,000 tons of peat, 90 million bricks and tiles, and five million square metres of window glass. (In 1928 the total Byelorussian output of window glass was estimated at 1,170,000 square metres.)

Forestry

137 According to the census of January 1, 1935, the forest area of the B.S.S.R. was 3,817,000 hectares, 22.9 per cent. of the area of the Republic, and 0.6 per cent. of the total forest area of the Soviet Union. Another 2,538,000 hectares were added to the B.S.S.R.'s forest area in 1939, when West Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union.

Timber

313 The production of commercial timber, largely pine, fir and oak, has been centred in the areas of Bobruisk, Mozyr, Borisov, and Polotsk. Timber is considered one of the most valuable of Byelorussia's natural resources, and has figured largely in her relatively insignificant export trade. In 1926-27, for example, an income of 20 million roubles was realized from export of timber, at a time when the Republic's budget totalled 80 million roubles, and the gross output of industry was valued at 133 million roubles. In 1924-25, the only year for which details on the export of timber are available, the timber shipped from the B.S.S.R. amounted to 587,000 cubic metres of firewood and 749,000 cubic metres of other timber. About 60 per cent. of this was sent to the Ukraine (within the U.S.S.R.) and the remainder, plywood, oak, pine, and other products, was shipped abroad via the Baltic States.

The advanced development of the timber industry in the B.S.S.R. is revealed by the number of sawing frames which the Republic had in pre-war years. As at April 1, 1939, (before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia) the B.S.S.R. possessed 256 of the Soviet Union's 6,500 frames.

313 This high proportion should be contrasted with the small forest area of this Republic in relation to that of the whole U.S.S.R.

185 313 433 The goal set for timber deliveries by the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is 11,100,000 cubic metres; and cuttings during the period 1946-50 are planned at 58,400,000 cubic metres. The aggregate timber deliveries attained during four and one-quarter years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-32, amounted to 32,600,000 cubic metres, or 7,670,000 annually. In 1928 it had been estimated that the timber resources of the B.S.S.R. were adequate to permit cuttings of 12 million cubic metres a year by 1932. This scale of cuttings was never reached, but the figure is mentioned here because it approximates the present plan of annual deliveries set for 1950, at a time when the area of Byelorussia is about double what it was in 1928.

The reason for this is that a large amount of easily accessible timber was burned out by the Germans during the war. The Governor of Vitebsk oblast, quoting from official figures, told members of the UNRRA Mission in June 1946 that 22 per cent. of the oblast was covered by good timber before the war but at present only 16 per cent. It was estimated by the Governor of Polotsk oblast that 46 percent. of the forests of the oblast were cut, burned or taken away during the war. Post-war cutting operations will therefore be restricted in many areas, and a reforestation programme will be carried out on an area of 189,000 hectares. Meanwhile, felling will be centred in the dense swamp areas previously untouched and impossible to exploit without extensive development of motor and narrow-gauge haulways provided for in the Five Year Plan.

Of the 1950 goal for timber production, 5 million cubic metres is set for annual production under the direction of the Timber Ministry of the B.S.S.R. An undisclosed amount will be produced under the auspices of local and co-operative industry. Although no full details are at present available, nevertheless, a few comparisons with pre-war production are possible. For example, in 1928 the production of plywood in Byelorussia amounted to 59,000 cubic metres, and in 1940 to 254,000 cubic metres (36.2 per cent. of the plywood output of the Soviet Union). In 1950 the plywood output of republican, local, and co-operative industry is scheduled to be 118,500 cubic metres. No pre-war figures are available for sawn lumber output, except for 1928, when 636,060 cubic metres were produced. The planned output of sawn lumber for 1950 is 1,800,000 cubic metres, nearly three times the 1928 amount.

[439] As for the export of timber, no figures are available, but it is known that Byelorussian timber has been and still is an important source of mine props for the Donets coal mines in the Ukrainian S.S.R. 313 185 However, in view of the tremendous shelter rehabilitation programme in devastated Byelorussia, it does not seem likely that there will be much surplus timber available. Of 400,000 collective farm houses scheduled for restoration, only 60,000 are to be built of brick. An equal, if not larger, number of public buildings were destroyed on collective farms;

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be 185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27, of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in Minsk.)

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Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or 6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons, or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be 433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced. During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946, when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing, without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present operations are carried out in the single building which has been restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to 372 pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

•316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

316 433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

288 433 185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

727 393 433 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May. Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

•323 433 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials 433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]

727 value; the Germans then proceeded either to blow up the buildings or raze them to the ground. They thus destroyed 23 of the largest factories, the railway-car repair works, the machine-tool plant, the "Proletari" glass factory, two brick kilns, the "Cdarmik" scales manufacturing plant, the meat-packing plants, eleven bakeries, confectionery and biscuit factories, the knitted-goods mills, and the "October" and "Krupskaya" garment factories.

In their inspection tours of the B.S.S.R., UNRRA Mission observers have noted wide-scale devastation and plunder everywhere; the most severely devastated areas being the northeast and central sections of the Republic. After a visit to northeast Byelorussia, Mission members reported that they had not seen a single factory intact. Devastation of industry was complete, and restoration has had to start from the ground up.

339 Starting from the ground up, however, is always difficult; and it is particularly difficult in the B.S.S.R., where there is a shortage
727 of everything required to do the job. Building materials, electric power, machinery, and transport are all critically scarce. The chief building material seems to be salvaged brick from the rubble of destroyed factory buildings; and most of the reconstruction work is being done by hand. Power equipment of the kind ordinarily seen on major construction jobs is almost completely lacking. UNRRA Mission members even as late as June 1946 had not seen a crane, powershovel, bulldozer, scraper, or tractor in use. Later in the year some of the UNRRA machinery began to arrive, but nowhere in quantities sufficient to make a real impact.

Lumber and bricks for reconstruction purposes are being manufactured at restored factories, but output is only a fraction of normal. Under the German occupation practically all sawmills in Byelorussia were looted of machinery and then demolished when the Germans were driven out. In Vitebsk oblast, all the large pre-war sawmills were destroyed. Up to June 1946 it had been possible to restore only a few. Polotsk oblast before the war had 12 large sawmills; in 1944 only about five to ten per cent. of the sawing frames remained. By mid-1946, although 17 sawmills were operating in this oblast, their work was proceeding on a very small scale, usually in the open air, and with limited equipment. Output of lumber was greater than before the war, but it consisted only of logs, beams, and rough-finished boards, since the equipment was inadequate for well finished work.

Brick plants were likewise destroyed by the Germans, and are in process of restoration. In Polotsk oblast, for example, there were before the war, 36 brick yards. In 1944 there was not one remaining in the entire oblast. In the summer of 1946 there were 17 back in partial operation; and 32 more were expected to be built in 1946-47.
339 The UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia supplied the following description of Polotsk brick factory No. 4, which had been partially restored by June 1946:

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

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871 the general education law in the Mogilevskaya and Baranovicheskaya oblast'. The inspection revealed the far from comforting state of general education in these oblast's. In the majority of the rayons of the oblast's which were inspected the registration of school age children is conducted very carelessly, and in some places registration is utterly absent (the Kamenskiy village soviet of the Kletskiy rayon). The population areas covered by some of the schools are not determined, and for that reason these schools have no responsibility for the registration of children. Also, there is no account of the reasons for long absences and general failure to attend school. It has been determined that merely in the Liakhovicheskiy rayon of the Baranovicheskaya oblast' for unexplained reasons no more than 90 children are being taught. As a result of the surveys, the lowest attendance of schools has been found in the Shklovskiy, Mstislavskiy, Khotimskiy, Novomyshskiy, Ivetskiy, Kletskiy, Bytenskiy, and other rayons. "In every one of these rayons some 100 and more children do not attend school", notes the Uchitel'skaia Gazeta on its pages of October 17th, 1953. More than 200 rayons can be counted in Soviet Belorussia, which means that more than 20,000 children are not attending school.

How can one explain the fact that children leave school for a time and often do not attend it at all? On the other hand, how explain the indulgence on the part of the Soviet authorities towards a population which is not abiding by the law of general education? The reasons are very simple. There are no special funds at the schools for offering help to children in obtaining clothes and footwear, no means are provided for the preparation of hot breakfasts. There are no living quarters for students at the schools, and transportation is not arranged for those living far from school. Soviet authority, with all its severity regarding the execution of its decrees, cannot "oblige" and force the barefooted, poorly dressed and hungry children of kolkhozniks to attend school in rain and in the severe winter weather. Soviet authority has declined to fulfill the obligation decreed in 1918 and confirmed by the Soviet government act of August 14th, 1930, "On general compulsory education". It refuses to offer state assistance to school children. This is why general education is not carried out in the schools.

●346 /70/ The success of school work depends on many things and
871 to a considerable degree on conditions of training. For successful

training, preservation of the health of students, and for their normal physical development, dry, warm, sunny, spacious classrooms with a sufficient amount of fresh air are necessary. During the war the school buildings in Belorussia were almost completely destroyed. Only ruins remained of large cities. But in smaller towns and villages the school buildings with rare exceptions were preserved at the beginning of the war. Later, however, with the development of partisan warfare in Belorussia, schools, hospitals, restored churches and other public buildings were, at the order of Moscow, completely burned by the partisans. This senseless barbarity caused great damage to the Belorussian people and its younger generation. Schools in villages were of no strategic importance and could not have been used by the Germans for military purposes. Part of the school buildings were destroyed together with the villages in various German maneuvers during the battles with partisans. We have already mentioned that Soviet propaganda claims that what was destroyed by the war has been restored, and that includes schools. Unfortunately, a wide discrepancy exists between Soviet propaganda and reality. The construction of schools in the BSSR is in an intolerable state, and the results of the "peaceful socialist construction" are far from comforting. This is proved by the scanty information which is appearing in the Soviet press. "The fact that the plan for the large-scale construction of school buildings and putting them to use has not been fulfilled year after year, can no longer be tolerated", writes Zviazda of May 31st, this year. One fact which attracts attention is the failure of school construction as a generally Belorussian phenomenon and furthermore an annual, therefore a constant one. It is reported in the paper that "the Polesskaya oblast' did not fulfill the plan for using the means assigned for the construction of schools: 18. 5 per cent in 1950, 23. 5 per cent in 1951, and 39, 3 per cent in 1952. The percentage of "exploitation" of the means for the construction of schools in the Polesskaya oblast' has been constantly decreasing for the last three years. In 1952, 40 per cent of the projected schools were not built. The Polesskaya oblast' is no exception: schools are not being built in the Molodechinskaya, Bobruiskaya, Vitebskaya or Polotskaya oblast's either. In the Polotskaya oblast' "of the two million rubles released by the government for the planned construction of schools, only 30 per cent has been used". The paper Zviazda of June 3rd of this

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871
year notes that 466 thousand rubles were assigned for the construction of the Vetrinskaya school in the Polotskaya oblast', but only 195,000 rubles have been used so far, and that not advantageously. Unsuitable brick was supplied, which was used in the building of walls. When the builders noticed it, 25,000 bricks had to be torn down and new bricks used for rebuilding the walls. In this way at least 35 to 40 per cent of the means annually assigned for building schools is not used. This means that it is not enough to have Soviet rubles in store; school buildings must be assured of labor power and building material. And the schools are the last of all to receive these advantages. Financial means, labor power and building material are first assigned to constructions of military significance, as the Soviet rulers know very well.

[474] Apart from the state constructions, there exists in villages the so-called "method of the people's construction". This method is very simple. Beside many other economic campaigns the kolkhozniks /71/ of a rayon are bound to build with their own efforts and means several schools, clubs, reading rooms, bridges, etc. The paper Zviazda quotes as an example the Sharkovskiy rayon in the Polotskaya oblast', which accepted the obligation to build at the beginning of the school year, by the "method of the people's construction", five seven-grade and one elementary School, to expand the school capacity to one thousand student seats, carry out thorough repairs in six schools and less general repairs in forty-two schools. We have no information as to the way the kolkhozniks of the Sharkovskiy rayon fulfilled this colossal program. If with a budget of hundreds of thousand of rubles and with building material and labor power at the disposal of the rayon executive committees the building of schools goes on for several years, one wonders whether kolkhozniks with the "method of the people's construction" will be able to enrich the rayon at their own cost with six new seven-grade schools, expand the school capacity to one thousand seats, and repair all the schools in the rayon. Judging by the pace of the work in constructing schools, Belorussian children will have to study reading and writing in inadequate, cold, restricted schoolrooms for many years to come.

The Soviet authority has assigned the fuel supply and maintenance of schools in country localities to the local population. In the usual confusion and without any organization or building material, schools are not being repaired and are deteriorating. In a number of rayons,

according to the reports of the newspapers, preparation and delivery [346] of fuel for schools had not started even in August, shortly before the 871 beginning of the school year.

The success of training in schools is also conditioned by prompt and sufficient provision of students with textbooks, instruments, writing accessories, well equipped and completed physical, chemical and biological school laboratories and libraries. Several Soviet organizations, independent of each other, are engaged in providing students with textbooks in the BSSR. For this reason the textbooks, instruments and writing acessories have to travel a long way before they reach school shelves or bookstores.

"Books are left lying for a long time at the editor's and proof- [214] reader's in the publishing house, they are held up even at the typesetter's. Almost-finished products lie for two and more months at the sewing and binding establishments. All this means that the established norm for the work on textbooks is not fullfilled from one month to another... A considerable number of textbooks is held up because of the shortage of maps and the unsatisfactory organization of the productive process of publication and typography. Books concerned with methodology are being published particularly slowly: Out of 46 such titles which were planned, only 5 have been printed." (Zviazda of May 21st, current year).

Colossal sums are being expended for the printing of various propaganda material, as well as publications designed for foreign countries. This material is made up with special care and luxury. The appearance of the textbooks designed for Soviet schoolchildren is quite different.

"Textbooks are printed on poor paper, covers are smeared with printer's ink. The work of the sewing and binding divisions of the printing press is of a particularly low quality. Many books, even if they are most carefully treated, soon break and fall apart." (Zviazda, April 25th of this year). /72/

The most indispensable tools and products are absent from the school laboratories. The laboratories of provincial and country schools are especially poor. The teaching of physics, chemistry and natural sciences is reduced to a study without experiments and examples. The situation of the school libraries is no better: they are mostly oversupplied with Soviet political literature, while the classics are unavailable. School furniture consists of an assortment of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

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russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the 131
Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 728
48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelorussian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia [133]
was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agricultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications. Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the [133]
annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per cent of the total territory.[34]

There are but few small towns in Western Byelorussia; only two 361 ●
localities have about 50,000 inhabitants each, Grodno and Brest Litovsk. Originally 'Western Byelorussia' as it had emerged from the Molotov-Ribbentrop deal for the partition of Poland, had one town of 100,000 inhabitants, Bialystok, a centre of the Polish textile industry and the only place in the whole of 'Western Byelorussia' possessing a fairly large industrial class. For this reason, Bialystok was chosen as a kind of emergency capital of Western Byelorussia during the weeks between its occupation by the Red Army and its full incorporation into the B.S.S.R. The 'Peoples Assembly' of Western Byelorussia which on October 28th, 1939, formulated its 'request for admission into the U.S.S.R.' also met in Bialystok.

The new 'centre of Western Byelorussia' had the drawback that it had 563
no Byelorussian population; it had only Polish and Jewish inhabitants and the outskirts of the town were Polish. In view of the national compo- [128]
sition of Bialystok and its surroundings the Soviet Government was unable to maintain its claim to the Bialystok area after the end of the war, particularly since it was located to the east of the Curzon line which Russia adopted in principle as the Polish-Russian frontier. The area of Bialystok covering roughly 5,800 square miles was thus re-allocated to Poland. This transfer was advantageous for the Soviet Union since the B.S.S.R. rid itself thereby of a Polish population of 1,000,000 and thus considerably reduced the seriousness of the minority problem within its boundaries.

After the annexation of Western Byelorussia the minority issue threatened to cause considerable worry to the Minsk Government, since half of the annexed population were either Poles or Jews. In the post-war B.S.S.R. this problem no longer arose not only because of the substantial frontier rectification in Poland's favour in the Bialystok area,

407 tractors in time for either the spring or the autumn ploughing season in 1946. The first shipment of UNRRA tractors arrived in the Republic in December. Altogether, UNRRA expects to deliver about 800 tractors. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture gave the Mission an estimate that 20,000 15-horsepower tractor units would be needed to reorganize farm work on an adequate level of mechanization.[1]

In speaking of the need for farm machinery in this Republic, the UNRRA Mission said: "It is important to recognize that Byelorussian farming is not a hand-tool agriculture. Rehabilitation and recovery here does not mean a better hoe - it means a better tractor. It means more combine threshers, more grain drills and mechanized equipment. Rehabilitation of agriculture here means re-establishment of the pre-war rate of mechanization of farms, which, in turn, will release labour for still more tractor factories and still more industrialization. Byelorussian farmers spaded by hand 200,000 hectares (half a million acres) in 1945 and half that amount in 1946. Such labours do great credit to the industry of the farmers, but a hungry Byelorussia and a hungry world will not be fed by such primitive farming methods."

Farm Buildings

727 362 By the end of 1946 enough housing had been repaired or built in the B.S.S.R. to enable 250,000 families (about 1.5 million people) to move from dugouts or caves into houses. Rural schools had also been transferred from dugouts to new premises. The Byelorussian newspaper Sovietskaya Byelorussia (issues of December 17 and 34, 1946) reported that 254,000 houses had been restored in rural areas since liberation. Eighty-two thousand had been rebuilt in 1944, 112,000 in 1945, and 60,000 in 1946, and 45,556 houses were still in process of construction. As at the end of 1946, 10,000 rural families (50,000 people) were still living in dugouts and caves.

Farm Manpower

464 Besides the deplorable housing situation, which contributes to lowered work efficiency, there is a great shortage of labour. Since the war it is women rather than men who constitute the main labour force on Byelorussian farms. UNRRA Mission observations in mid-1946 gave a ratio of four to six women to every man. In some sections, 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women. On one farm visited the labour force consisted of five men, 75 women, and 21 young boys and girls. A total of 43 men from this one farm had been killed during the war.

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[1] The 15-horsepower unit is the common method of computing tractor numbers. Most Soviet tractors are larger than 15-horsepower, but a 45-horsepower machine would be considered, for example, as equivalent to three tractor units. An editorial in Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, January 8, 1947, stated that the average output per 15-horsepower tractor in 1946 was 338 hectares of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, which is 73 hectares higher than the average for 1945.

Housing Reconstruction

727 The cities of Byelorussia were universally laid waste by the Germans, and even today they are still in ruins with great empty spaces and blocks of gutted buildings. Rebuilding is proceeding slowly.

•362 According to official estimates, 74 per cent. of the housing space
185 in cities and raion centres of the B.S.S.R. was destroyed during the war. The Five Year Plan calls for the restoration of 4,200,000 square metres of urban housing during the next five years, of which 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home builders assisted by state loans. During the two years between liberation and September 1946, a total of 1.2 million square metres of housing had been restored in cities and raion centres; but this was the easiest part of the work, since it involved mostly the repair of those buildings which still had some walls standing. Housing restoration will have to move at a faster rate than 600,000 square metres a year to reach the 4.2 million square metres goal by 1950, when there is to be an estimated 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space in Byelorussia.

In the restoration plans, provision is made to erect three prefabricated house factories with a combined annual output capacity of 600,000 square metres of housing by 1950.

The long-term housing plan is to provide 9 square metres per person, according to the Mayor of Minsk. However, in October 1946 facilities were much below that standard, and it seemed doubtful to the UNRRA Mission whether the figure would be reached by 1950.

The present per capita housing space available is not known. But in cities like Gomel, UNRRA Mission observers have been given estimates that available houses are occupied at double to triple their pre-war capacity.

The only available figures on pre-war housing are those for the first Five Year Plan period. These apply to what were then classed as "okrug", or regional cities, of which there were in 1927, eleven with a combined population of approximately 540,000. In 1927-28 they had a total of 3,093,000 square metres of housing space, occupied at the rate of 5.5 square metres per person. The first Five Year Plan called for expanding the housing space in "okrug" cities to a total of 4,263,000 square metres, occupied at the rate of 6.69 square metres per person.

The target of 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space by 1950 is about double the 1932 figure. This amount, including housing in some 170 raion (district) centres, is distributed among what are classed as "oblast" cities (these governed directly by the oblast or regional soviet as well as by the local city soviet), which were 18 in number in 1945. Among this number are all those cities classed as "okrug" cities in 1926, plus seven cities in the western oblasts; Baranovichi, Brest, Vileika, Grodno, Lida, Molodechno, and Pinsk.

362 185 These seven cities were not included in the 1939 census, when the total urban population of Byelorussia was determined as nearly 1.4 million persons. Assuming that the urban centres of Byelorussia merely recover their pre-war population, and if the urban residents of western Byelorussia be included, the per capita urban housing space available in 1950 will certainly be much less than 9 square metres, since at that rate 8.2 million square metres could supply only about 900,000 occupants. The actual per person rate of urban housing space in 1950 is more likely to be near the 1932-33 rate if planned targets of reconstruction are achieved.

727 In the rural areas of the B.S.S.R., shelter demolition amounted to 400,000 dwellings of collective farmers, and an indeterminate number of individual peasant homes. In the western oblasts, as has already been noted, the great majority of farmers are not yet in collectives. In a single oblast, Molodechno, 16,000 peasant farms were laid waste. In Grodno oblast, where 117,000 civilians were slain by the Germans, demolition of homes was on a equal, if not greater scale. Thousands of individual peasant homes were also destroyed in other oblasts. A reported total of 1.2 million buildings of all kinds, houses, barns, sheds, offices, were destroyed in the rural areas. As at October 1946, 235,000 dwellings had been restored in the villages, providing shelter for 1.5 million people who were then able to move out of temporary shelters, mostly dugouts and caves. On the whole, progress in the restoration of shelter seems to be more rapid in the villages than in the cities.

Supplementary Aid from the U.S.S.R.

727 362 On December 31, 1946, the Byelorussian Council of Ministers published in "Sovietskaya Byelorussia" a statement that at its request the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. had adopted a decree providing for assistance in the restoration of raions of the B.S.S.R. which had especially suffered from the occupation.

Under the terms of the decree, 27 million roubles have been granted by the U.S.S.R. for expenditure on 2,000 dwelling houses to be constructed in the areas of Byelorussia most devastated by the war. Built at state expense, these houses are to provide shelter for the most needy: families of war invalids, and of fighters (both army and partisan) killed in the war. The total fund is allocated for distribution among 38 districts or raions which are all situated in the eastern and central oblasts of the Republic. Vitebsk, Polotsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Minsk, Bobruisk, and Polessia oblasts are to benefit by the grant.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1

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S.U. 635 Be. 442 131/161 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be. 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [665]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [100]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [92]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or
6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which
was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons,
or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced. During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946, when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which
are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing,
without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a
few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present
operations are carried out in the single building which has been
restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the
match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in
operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a
year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this
output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and
additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
372 pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

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433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

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433
185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from
restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
433 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet
185 production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15
per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced
under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in
433 1950 is expected to be as follows:
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Shoes	7 million pairs
Hosiery	13.5 " "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000 units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000 "

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

● 377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were
almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from
UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme,
has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when
UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk,
facilities were estimated to be as follows.

TABLE XI

377 727 Electric Power Facilities in Four Byelorussian Cities, Pre-War and June 1946

City	Population June 1946	Pre-war capacity of electric stations (kilowatts)	June 1946 as per-cent. of pre-war
Borisov	43,000	4,500	22
Orsha	34,000	30,000	10
Vitebsk	62,000[1]	12,000	6
Polotsk	24,000	2,500	2

[1] 1939 population: 167,424.

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

In these cities, all electricity available was being consumed by industry and public institutions, while dwellings were virtually without light. At Orsha, the restored facilities could have furnished light to dwellings as well, provided there had been wiring, switches, and bulbs.

The situation in rural areas is even worse. Before the war many collective farms had their own small electric power stations, all of which were plundered or destroyed by the Germans. The Surazh raion had six small farm stations with a total capacity of 800 kilowatts before the war; but even as late as June 1946 it had nothing, because although a new station was under construction at Surazh, there was no equipment for it.

The present shortage of electric power is a serious obstacle hampering industrial recovery. In this respect, UNRRA is making a considerable contribution. As at October 1, 1946, 30 power units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been shipped to the B.S.S.R., and 35 additional units representing electric generating capacity of 10,400 kilowatts were still to be delivered.

185 377 The Five Year Plan calls for the output of 650 million kilowatt hours of energy in 1950. To achieve this, electric power stations with a capacity of 243,000 kilowatts are to be rebuilt and put into operation. Small hydro-electric stations with a total capacity of 16,000 kilowatts are to be built, and the municipal power stations at Gomel, Mozyr, Grodno, and other towns restored.

For the development of the economy of the Republic, there are to be put into operation electric power stations under the Republic's jurisdiction with a total capacity of 47,000 kilowatts, including hydro-electric stations with 10,000 kilowatt capacity.

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

727 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was
393 a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May.
Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet
433 Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

323 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more
433 limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials
433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]

474 As a result of the growth of collectivization and the M.T.S., the need for human labour decreased; and the entire process of production was reduced to about half the number of work days required on individual farms. By the end of the second Five Year Plan (1938) there were 242,392 collective farms in the Soviet Union; 9,665 of them were located in Byelorussia. Altogether they cultivated 85 per cent. of the total area sown in the U.S.S.R. and produced the bulk of the grain, cotton, sugar, flax, and other raw materials required for the population, industry, and export. At the same time, the individual plots which the kolkhoz members were permitted to keep were furnishing a large part of the berries, fruit, and vegetables which appeared in the city markets.

There were two principal ways in which collective farms delivered agricultural products to the government: through payments in kind to the M.T.S. and the flour mills; and through direct sales of a certain quota. Whatever remained after the fulfilment of the quota, the collectives could distribute among their members.

As has been said, the Byelorussian Republic by 1938 had 9,665 collective farms, which in that year cultivated 2.8 million of the 3.3 million hectares sown in the Republic. That is, Byelorussian kolkhozes were responsible for tilling nearly 85 per cent. of the cultivated area of the Republic in 1938, while the machine and tractor stations were serving nearly 87 per cent. of the total crop area, not only the collectives, but some individual farms as well.[1] In the B.S.S.R. the number of M.T.S. had steadily increased from 63 in 1932 to 200 by 1937, and just before the German attack in June 1941 there were 342 machine and tractor stations in the Republic. The increase after 1937 was largely due to the growth of mechanization in Western Byelorussia, where under the Soviet system more than 100 of these stations were organized. (See next section.)[2]

407 A large number of machines was available in the Republic before the war, both in the M.T.S. and on individual farms. From 1932 to 1937 the number of tractors in the B.S.S.R. grew from 3,200 to 8,100; and by June 1941 the Republic had 12,000 tractors. In 1932 there had been only four harvesting combines in operation in Byelorussia; by the end of 1937 the number had risen to 674; and in June 1941 the Republic had 1,500 combines and 2,300 threshers at work. In addition to tractors and combines, trucks have also played an important part in the mechanization of Byelorussian agriculture. By 1938 the Republic possessed 4,237 trucks for farm purposes; and their total carrying capacity was reckoned at 7,600 tons. (Compare 195,800 trucks in the U.S.S.R. as a whole, with 352,100 tons carrying capacity.) At the

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[1] According to a recent statement by the Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture, work on the cropland "before the war" was 60 per cent. mechanized. This lower percentage is explained by the fact that up to June 1941 Western Byelorussia was still in process of mechanization, and far behind other regions of the B.S.S.R.

[2] [See cat 116, pp 26-27 -- Analyst]

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the *Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland*, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

433 246 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

433 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertilizer available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any

407 tractors in time for either the spring or the autumn ploughing season in 1946. The first shipment of UNRRA tractors arrived in the Republic in December. Altogether, UNRRA expects to deliver about 800 tractors. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture gave the Mission an estimate that 20,000 15-horsepower tractor units would be needed to reorganize farm work on an adequate level of mechanization.[1]

In speaking of the need for farm machinery in this Republic, the UNRRA Mission said: "It is important to recognise that Byelorussian farming is not a hand-tool agriculture. Rehabilitation and recovery here does not mean a better hoe - it means a better tractor. It means more combine threshers, more grain drills and mechanized equipment. Rehabilitation of agriculture here means re-establishment of the pre-war rate of mechanization of farms, which, in turn, will release labour for still more tractor factories and still more industrialization. Byelorussian farmers spaded by hand 200,000 hectares (half a million acres) in 1945 and half that amount in 1946. Such labours do great credit to the industry of the farmers, but a hungry Byelorussia and a hungry world will not be fed by such primitive farming methods."

Farm Buildings

727 By the end of 1946 enough housing had been repaired or built in
the B.S.S.R. to enable 250,000 families (about 1.5 million people) to
362 move from dugouts or caves into houses. Rural schools had also been
transferred from dugouts to new premises. The Byelorussian newspaper
Sovietskaya Byelorussia (issues of December 17 and 24, 1946) reported
that 254,000 houses had been restored in rural areas since liberation.
Eighty-two thousand had been rebuilt in 1944, 112,000 in 1945, and
60,000 in 1946, and 45,556 houses were still in process of construction.
As at the end of 1946, 10,000 rural families (50,000 people) were still
living in dugouts and caves.

Farm Manpower

464 Besides the deplorable housing situation, which contributes to lowered work efficiency, there is a great shortage of labour. Since the war it is women rather than men who constitute the main labour force on Byelorussian farms. UNRRA Mission observations in mid-1946 gave a ratio of four to six women to every man. In some sections, 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women. On one farm visited the labour force consisted of five men, 75 women, and 21 young boys and girls. A total of 43 men from this one farm had been killed during the war.

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[1] The 15-horsepower unit is the common method of computing tractor numbers. Most Soviet tractors are larger than 15-horsepower, but a 45-horsepower machine would be considered, for example, as equivalent to three tractor units. An editorial in Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, January 8, 1947, stated that the average output per 15-horsepower tractor in 1946 was 338 hectares of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, which is 73 hectares higher than the average for 1945.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE BELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

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[Constitution as of July, 1947]

421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

185 471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Belorussian SSR is determined and directed by the State national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of strengthening the Belorussian SSR, and of consolidating the independence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Belorussian SSR work is a duty and matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Belorussian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

631 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

Art. 14. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Moghilev, Molodechno, Pinsk, Polessye and Polotsk Regions.

642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

575 641 sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[687] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

814 literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of [661] folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovsh china) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

● 423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category 116 -- Analyst]

423 the land was hereditary property, which had the positive results of continual and steady use of the land and the negative one of constant subdivision of the peasant holdings in the country. The Bolshevik uprising did not bring about any significant improvements in the life of the small holders as sovkhozes and kolkhozes were organized on the large estates. Up until 1930, D. Prishchepov, a former Socialist-Revolutionary, was the head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture. He had managed to live abroad and become acquainted with agricultural conditions in Denmark and Germany. Upon his return to Belorussia he contemplated a series of measures which he considered the more useful since they were in accordance with the desires of the great mass of the Belorussian peasantry. So as to increase the land fund and distribute it among those who had little or none, Prishchepov managed to abolish a part, although an insignificant one, of the Soviet farms and also to bring about significant reductions in the land belonging to these establishments. As the basic unit of land to be used, Prishchepov chose the small village of ten to twenty peasant farms, with comfortable farmsteads of up to one hectare in size. /11/
[311] Even in those times it cost him[1] a great effort to prove the advantage of the small village over the large one as a method of land exploitation. The necessity of rapid reconstruction of the system of land tenure in Belorussia was obvious. In the first place there was the question of what to do with the reserve land which had been given for temporary use to the landless peasants and those with small holdings. Then, it was proposed to apportion crowded and disorganized large villages among small ones. Part of the peasantry wanted small separate farms under the new system, but Prishchepov could not officially establish separate farmsteads. In practice it happened as an exception that, when lands were being distributed in the woods, separate farms were
668 cut out as well as small villages. . . To placate the theoreticians, Prishchepov[1] had to assure them that it was very easy to make the transformation from a small village to an agricultural commune. Prishchepov knew quite well how absurd these assurances were, but being one of the leaders of the national movement he was guided by the interests of the country and not by the presuppositions of the
654 Communists which at the time were both unclear and confused. In addition to increasing agricultural assistance Prishchepov[1] introduced a series of measures designed to encourage improvements on the holdings of independent peasants. Various types of agricultural exibition

[1] [D. Prishchepov, head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture, beginning about 1920 to 1930 - Analyst]

654 were widely promoted by Narkomzem where diplomas and testimonials were presented and prizes of goods and cash awarded. All these measures of D. Prishchepov were subsequently brought against him as accusations, to show that he was against the socialist forms of agriculture and that his work was not only harmful but outright sabotage.

423 The "gathering together" of the Belorussian lands and their unification with the B. S. S. R. was completed only in the beginning of 1927 ... The question of consolidating within the B. S. S. R. regions which were tied to it economically as well as having a homogeneous population had been raised several times before the Kremlin ... The problem was not solved until 1924 partly by the annexation of a
000 section of the Vitebsk and Mogilev provinces. On the occasion of the annexation of these regions an extraordinary session of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R. was convoked, with workers and peasants also participating. The President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., M. Kalinin, was present at the session, together with two well-known Comintern figures -- the Poles Felix Kohn and Tomasz Dombalj. During his own speech Dombalj turned to the loge of the Polish counsul and cried out in a burst of revolutionary enthusiasm, "Remember that only we have the right to speak in the name of Poles and peasants!" Dombalj was a deputy to the Polish Sejm and for belonging to the Communist Party had been tried and exchanged for someone in the Soviet Union. The future Soviet Marshall, Tukhachevskii, was also present at the session, and his restrained and correct deportment contrasted with that of the Caucasian, Gai, the commander of the Cavalry Corps, /12/ who paced up and down nervously during his speech and shouted, "We will water our horses in the Vistula yet!" The session was officially designated as a triumphant celebration of the correctness of Soviet policy toward the nationalities. M. Kalinin, by attending, emphasized the "voluntary accession" of the territory of the B. S. S. R.; the Polish Communists who were present demonstrated their solidarity with the Soviets in questions of policy toward minorities, in opposition to the policy of Poland which had taken over western Belorussia while General Zhilunovich forcibly occupied Wilno. The speeches of Tukhachevskii, the deputy director of the Red Army General Staff, and Gai, who had taken part in the raid, on Warsaw, even though it was unsuccessful, bore witness to the unsatisfied pretensions to Poland which were backed up with armed might.

661 Professor Ignatovskii was widely known and very popular for his prominent activities. In those days the G. P. U. did not yet dare to throw him in a cellar and make short work of him. As a result of his suicide there were persistent rumors that the G. P. U. had succeeded in getting Professor Ignatoviskii to name those members of the national movement who had taken upon themselves to check the Soviet regime in Belorussia and establish a democratic system. The professor preferred death, but even before his suicide the movement had been dealt a telling blow by the arrest of the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R., Dimitrii Prishchepov. Himself a son of the people and a former teacher he was well able to understand the age long striving of the Belorussian peasant for a private farm of his own. He knew the reasons for the backwardness, poverty, and need 241 of the countryside. Before collectivization, his[1] activities had been 423 directed toward strengthening the private working peasant's position 661 by building them homesteads which were generally grouped in small hamlets but frequently isolated. This arrangement gave the peasant wide scope for his own initiative, and he could also draw on state agricultural assistance. /21/ This tendency in the work of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture turned out to be in complete contradiction to the Kremlin's avowed policy of collectivizing agriculture, and besides, an unheard of tempo of collectivization was demanded, with the country's total efforts directed at the destruction of the private peasants' farmstead to be replaced by the other, so-called socialist, form of agriculture. The most prosperous farms were ruined completely and their proprietors assigned to the outlawed category of kulaks -- then they were carted away under inhuman conditions and sent out to the most godforsaken and uninhabited regions of Siberia. The peasants who still remained unsubdued were tagged as podkulachnik' and subjected to public persecution and economic pressure in the form of a high head tax -- in spite of the fact that these peasants were the ones who had most of the diplomas and certificates which the Soviet government had given out for high showings in animal husbandry, gardening, truck 661 farming, etc. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture had to play first violin in this destruction -- in other words it had to destroy

[1] [D. Prishchepov, Peoples Commissar of Agriculture to 1730 - Analyst]

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had
12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural
machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by
311 about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R.,
its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the popu-
423 lation were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives;
[475] about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivisation in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944
left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy
241 had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

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438 433 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern factories arose. The timber industry was modernized and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

433 241 474 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. [728] Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviationsin Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Analyst]

II AGRICULTURE, LIVESTOCK BREEDING AND FISHING

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Before the war Byelorussia was one of the largest flax and potato-growing areas in the Soviet Union. In 1937, two years before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia, there were 255,000 hectares sown to flax and 631,000 hectares sown to potatoes in the B.S.S.R. The chief food crop produced in this Republic was grain (rye, wheat, oats, and barley), which occupied about 60 per cent. of the total area sown. In 1937 2,243,500 hectares were planted in grain, including 242,500 hectares of wheat, which before 1917 was produced on a very small scale.

The following table shows the area of the principal crops in the Byelorussian Republic in 1932 and 1937, compared with cultivated areas in the Soviet Union as a whole.

TABLE III

Byelorussian S.S.R.: Area of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
(thousand hectares)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	111	242.5	34,500	41,300
Rye	1,313	n.a.	25,800	22,700
Oats	613	"	15,400	17,600
All grain total	2,627	2,243.5	99,700	104,400
Potatoes	619	631	6,100	6,900
Flax and hemp	279	255	2,500[1]	2,125[1]
Orchards and gardens	76	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Total area under crop	3,983	3,514	134,400	135,300

[1] Flax only.

Note: n.a. means not available.

Sources: Development of the Soviet Economy, Moscow, 1940; Second Five Year Plan, Vol. II, Moscow, 1934; Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939; and Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939.

From 1932 to 1937, as the table shows, there was a decrease of 468,000 hectares in the area under cultivation in the B.S.S.R. Average yields of all crops, however, had been increased to a great extent, so that total production was raised by several million tons.

TABLE IV

241 Byelorussian S.S.R.: Production of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
433 (thousand metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	77.4	202.6	20,310.0	46,860.0
Other grain	1,616.3	1,618.3	49,480.0	73,430.0
Total grain	1,693.7	1,820.9	69,790.0	120,290.0
Potatoes	5,061.0	7,005.6	43,070.0	65,630.0
Flax	57.4	71.4	500.0	n.a.

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939; and Socialist Agriculture, Moscow, 1939.

Since the natural fertility of Byelorussian soil is not very high, improvements in the yields of various crops depend greatly on efficient cultivation, particularly on generous fertilizing, and other modern measures (including mechanization) which were widely applied on the farms of the U.S.S.R. during the collectivization of agriculture.

Collective Farms (Kolkhozes)

474 The greatest agricultural problems of the Soviet Union have been to increase the area under cultivation, to improve the methods of production, to raise yields per hectare as well as total production, and from this increased production, to insure that adequate supplies of food reach the towns and factories. The primary means of achieving these aims was the organization of individual farmers into collectives (kolkhozes), in which they could jointly maintain their livestock and work the land, using the most scientific methods of livestock breeding, soil cultivation, crop rotation and fertilizing, but above all, increasing the use of farm machinery. In the long run mechanization, with the replacement of horses by tractors, makes a greater area available for grain and other agricultural products such as potatoes and flax.

475 An outstanding feature of these new developments was the establishment of machine and tractor stations (M.T.S.), in which the government concentrated thousands of tractors, threshers, combines, and other large machines. The M.T.S., which had their own workshops and staffs of mechanics, carried out all the mechanized farm work for the collectives - ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. - in return for which they received fixed fees, payable in agricultural produce.

727 231 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared, and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 241 433 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with weeds and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

000 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in The war period from June 1941 to The Summer of 1944--Analyst]

474 Special mention should be made of the hopyard, which before the war was a very profitable enterprise, bringing in a gross income of 65,000 roubles in 1940. The hops died out during the war and were replanted in 1946; they are expected to produce a marketable crop this year (1947).

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474 Productivity of the Lenin collective farm[1] in 1946 was down to 40 per cent. below pre-war yields. The grain yield was 1.0 to 1.2 metric tons per hectare, compared with yields of 1.6 to 1.8 tons per hectare before the war. The potato crop was only 8 tons per hectare, half the pre-war yield of 16 tons, because the farm had unusually bad luck with potatoes in 1946, several fields being washed out completely.

The extreme decline is attributed to shortages of artificial fertilizers, formerly used in large amounts; the shortage of manure, resulting from the greatly diminished livestock herds; and the lack of machinery and manpower.

Ploughing is shallower than before the war; and seed bed preparation, less careful. The farmers realize that their ploughing and seed bed preparation are below the standards of good farm practice, but they are unable to do better until they get more tractors, implements, and horses. Before the war this farm customarily hired three or four tractors from the M.T.S.; in 1946 it was able to secure only one. Only 86 horses were available in 1946, and these on the average were smaller than before the war, and could not be fed as well. However, productivity in 1946 was greater than in the preceding year, chiefly because the farm had more men, more horses, and more equipment.

The Extent of the Post-War Recovery

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241 In the Byelorussian Republic as a whole the crop year 1945 was the first full year of reoccupation by Byelorussians. By 1946 agricultural production had made definite progress toward supplying the population with food. The sown area in 1946 reached 76 per cent. of pre-war, but the level of yields was depressed by inadequate soil preparation, shortages of fertilizers, and unfavourable weather. As a result the grain crop, although better than in 1945, was still only half of pre-war. The vegetable crop, grown largely from UNRRA seeds, was from 75 to 80 per cent. of pre-war in total production; while the potato crop, because rainfall was heavy during part of the growing season and because plantings were only 60 per cent. of pre-war, reached less than half pre-war in total output.

Seed Production

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246 The inadequacy of seed supplies has been a serious hindrance to full recovery of the pre-war area of cultivation. Particularly short were vegetable seeds (except potatoes), clovers, vetch, and timothy and other grasses, most of which are biennials or perennials requiring two years for the production of seed. There is also a shortage of flax seed;

[1] [See cat 116, pp 15- [illegible] Analyst]

433 246 and the restoration of this crop is important not only to provide fibre for the linen industry, but also to supply linseed oil, which is then further refined to produce edible oil, supplementing animal fats in the diet.

Clovers are especially needed to plant alternately in the areas where flax is grown. Both clover and timothy seed production were lost during the war. The improvement of these crops would do much to assist the rehabilitation of decimated and under-sized livestock herds. Plans have been made to reach a self-sustaining level of vegetable seed production by the spring of 1948. Adapted and satisfactory varieties of UNRRA seed are being used as parent stock.

Fertilizers

433 Fertilizers are an urgent requirement, as the low fertility of Byelorussian soil necessitates using large quantities both of manure and of chemicals. All are in extremely short supply. The fertiliser available in 1946 was only 15 per cent. of pre-war. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture estimated that in 1946 only 25 to 30,000 tons of potash were used, as compared with 160,000 tons before the war. As an example, one collective farm in the Polotsk oblast used before the war about 600,000 tons of fertilizers, but had only 500 tons in 1946.

In view of the shortage of manure and of the naturally slow progress in restoration of the soil-fertilizing grass and leguminous crops, large-scale measures are being taken in the B.S.S.R. to utilize peat as a fertilizer; the plan for 1947 is to use over 5 million tons.

Drainage Projects

312 Before the war Byelorussia was executing a plan for the ultimate drainage and reclamation of four million hectares of swamp land. Progress had been made by 1941 to the extent of reclaiming and planting 270,000 hectares. During the war the drainage system deteriorated, and in some places was deliberately destroyed to flood areas for defence purposes. Trench-digging and dredging machinery was removed by the Germans. Work on the restoration of the drainage canals began shortly after liberation; 25,000 hectares of drained land were restored to cultivation in 1945, and it was expected to restore an additional 33,000 hectares in 1946.

Farm Machinery

407 Farm machinery was, and is, badly depleted. In 1946 only three to five per cent. of the seeding of crops was done by machines; and tractors ploughed only about 20 to 25 per cent. of the cropland. The number of tractors available in 1946 was 25 to 30 per cent. of pre-war; but most of the machines were in bad condition, having been patched together from spare parts. It was hoped that UNRRA would be able to make early deliveries of tractors to the B.S.S.R.; but despite the urgency of the need, the Administration was not able to supply any

Livestock

231 Livestock production in 1946 was still less than a fourth of pre-war, and it was estimated that five years were necessary to restore it fully. Cattle numbers in May 1946 were reckoned by the UNRRA Mission at 30 to 35 per cent. of pre-war; pigs at 10 per cent., and sheep and goats at 25 per cent. Horses, although about 40 per cent. of the pre-war numbers, represented only about 25 per cent. of pre-war horsepower, because of age and small size.

One must bear in mind that these figures include not only the surviving livestock, but also gifts from other parts of the Soviet Union. Since the liberation, tens of thousands of cattle have been sent to Byelorussia by other Republics.

The pre-war numbers of livestock in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia, and the Soviet Union are shown in the table below.

TABLE VI

Pre-War Livestock Numbers in Byelorussia, West Byelorussia and the U.S.S.R.

	Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic		Western Byelorussia	Entire Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1938	1934	1938
Horses	n.a.	700,000[1]	779,000	15,400,000	16,200,000
Cows	962,800	1,027,200	1,306,000	33,500,000	50,900,000
Other cattle	391,900	878,100	631,000		
Pigs	1,054,400	1,951,000	1,555,000	11,500,000	25,700,000
Sheep and goats	896,700	1,077,300	1,684,000	36,500,000	66,600,000

[1] The 1935 figure

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; and Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941.

In this table it is interesting to note that although in Western Byelorussia before 1939 there was almost no mechanization of agriculture, the number of horses claimed is only 9,000 more than in the Byelorussian Republic (approximately the same area) where tractors and other machines did 85 to 87 per cent. of the farm work.

433 As a result of the wartime decrease of livestock and of agricultural products, the production of fats and oils in the B.S.S.R. during 1946 was estimated to be only about 15 to 20 per cent. of pre-war. Before the war the principal sources of edible fats were lard and butter. Consumption averaged about 22 to 25 kilograms per head. The return of an adequate

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 231 The Five Year Plan, 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries, and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,[1] taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter. [647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

185 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million
433 hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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1 Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

1 [in 1946--Analyst]

185 grain crop amounted to 119 million tons, and the target for 1950 is set
433 at 127 million metric tons. Production of potatoes in Byelorussia is to increase by 6 per cent., and of flax by 31 percent.

Fishing

226 Before the war fishing was an important source of food supply in Byelorussia, where the many inland lakes and streams abound in pike, perch, bass, sandre, bream, and other fresh-water fish. Osweia Lake, a body of water about 3,500 acres in extent, produced some 500 tons of fish annually, when 50 men were engaged in year-round fishing. At that time the fishing collective at the lake employed nets measuring almost a mile in overall length; but today very little fishing is being done for lack of nets and other equiptment. Osweia is not an isolated example.

[127] An extensive system of fish culture, including the stocking of fish and the addition of chemical fertilizers to assist plant growth in the lakes, was destroyed during the war. The Germans depleted available fish resources by discharging explosives under water to bring the stunned fish to the surface. Many young fish were exterminated by this method of explosive fishing, without regard to conservation. At present the system of fish culture in Byelorussia is being slowly reinstituted, but is handicapped by the lack of nets. UNRRA shipments of fishing gear have, however, contributed valuable assistance in this regard.

The new Five Year Plan provides that "by 1948, pond culture will be restored to pre-war proportions."

The fish catch in 1950 is expected to be 5,200 tons.

438 Minsk. Two large machine construction factories, "Kirov" and "Voroshilov"; the "Bolshevik" leather factory; the "Kaganovich" footwear factory; the "October" clothing factory; a peat plant, and a brick plant.

Mogilev. The "Dimitrov" machine construction factory; the "Kirov" motorcar repair works; the "Kuibyshev" silk factory; the "Stalin" leather factory; a pipe foundry, and a peat plant.

Vitebsk. The "Krasny Metallist" machine tools factory; the "Clara Zetkin" hosiery; the "KIM" hosiery and knitted fabrics factory, employing 10,000 workers; the "Kaganovich" flax mills, and many textile factories.

Gomel. The "Stalin" glass factory; the "Trud" footwear factory; the "Vesuvji" match factory, and a knitted fabrics factory.

[933] Industrial output in this city increased 100 times in comparison with production before 1914. In addition to the large factories listed above, a big machine building works, "Proletary", produced turning lathes; and another large plant "Kaganovich", was constructed to turn out agricultural machines. Gomel being a large railway junction, railway truck building works and railway engine repair works were also built there.

Other cities. In the small towns of Byelorussia, where before 1917 there were no industrial enterprises at all, a number of plants were developed; for example, in Bobruisk, large wood processing and clothing factories; in Krichov, a large cement factory; and in Orsha, a flax mill, meat cannery and brick works.

433 Altogether, in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans, industrial output in the B.S.S.R. increased considerably. The following table, reckoned in terms of 1926-27 prices, compares production in 1937 with the level of output in 1932.

TABLE VIII

● 433

B.S.S.R.: Industrial Output in 1932 and 1937
(in million roubles, 1926-27 prices)

	1932	1937
Metalworking	81[1]	233[1]
Chemical	43.9	106.7
Woodworking	115	201
Paper	18.5	42.1
Hosiery	29.6	117.3

[1] The output of the metalworking industry of the entire Soviet Union in 1932 and 1937 amounted to 9,410 million and 27,519 million roubles respectively.

Source: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

The gross industrial output of the B.S.S.R. in 1937 was 1,926 million roubles, as compared with 1,018 million in 1932 and only 116 million in 1913. In the Soviet Union as a whole, gross industrial output was 95,532 million roubles in 1937 as compared with less than half that amount (or 43,343 million roubles) in 1932.

Industrial Development of Western Byelorussia

Of the twelve oblasts which today comprise the Byelorussian Republic, five (Baranovichi, Brest, Pinsk, Grodno, and Molodechno) are in the western areas which were a part of Poland between 1920 and 1939. In 1939, when these oblasts rejoined the B.S.S.R., nearly 90 per cent. of their population was employed in agricultural work. The level of industry, as well as of agriculture, was very primitive, the yearly per capita industrial output being only 48 roubles, compared with 400 roubles per person output in the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. Despite the fact that in the western areas 88,000 hectares were under cultivation of flax in 1939, there were no flax mills in operation; whereas the B.S.S.R. by that time had 70 flax mills at work.

To overcome the relative backwardness of the western region and to assist the mechanization of agriculture, the Soviet Government invested 726,400,000 roubles there in 1940. In the period between incorporation and the German attack in June 1941, some increase in industrial output was achieved. For example, the match factory at Pinsk trebled its output.

727 Grodno, an important town in the western area, before the war had a bicycle plant, agricultural machinery works, a tobacco factory, lime works, and a shoe factory, all of which were demolished during the war. Brest, formerly named Brest-Litovsk, was a city of importance with a streetcar and sewer system and river traffic on the Bug. In August 1946,

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

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433 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May. Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

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433 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials
433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]

433 manufacturing linen from scraps. The aluminum factory in Borisov was making utensils, but the material available, all of which was supplied by UNRRA, was sufficient for only a small output.

Labour

464 As has already been noted, there is a shortage of all categories of workers. The outstanding characteristic of the present force is the high percentage of women and youthful workers. In the factories observed by the UNRRA Mission, from 75 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women and young people. Many of these are being trained in special schools.

The Five Year Plan in Industry

471 Under the new Five Year Plan for the rehabilitation of the Soviet economy, the volume of capital investments in the B.S.S.R. in 1946-50 is to be 6,950 million roubles, including 2,422 million for works under the Republic's jurisdiction. In the Soviet Union as a whole, capital investments for the same period are to amount to 250,300 million roubles, of which 157,500 million are to be used in industry.

433 185 The volume of production of Soviet industry in 1950 (the last year of the five year period) is fixed at 205,000 million roubles (in 1926-27 prices), an increase of 48 per cent. as compared with the 1940 output of 138,500 million roubles.

In Byelorussia, the volume of industrial goods produced by the Republic in 1950 is to exceed pre-war output by 16 per cent. The enterprises under the Republic's jurisdiction are to produce goods valued at 2,200 million, of which the output of state industries under local jurisdiction and of industrial co-operatives is to comprise 850 million roubles. The following table shows the physical goals fixed for Byelorussian industry under the Plan.

TABLE IX

B.S.S.R.: 1950 Planned Industrial Output Compared with U.S.S.R. Total

	Byelorussian Republic	Soviet Union total
Electric power (kilowatts)	650,000,000	82,000,000,000
Peat (tons)	4,162,000	44,300,000
Metal-working machines (units)	4,325	74,000[1]
Tractors (units)	5,000	112,000
Cement (tons)	320,000	10,500,000
Window glass (square metres)	5,000,000	80,000,000
Felled timber (cubic ")	11,100,000	280,000,000
Dressed lumber (cubic metres)	1,800,000	39,000,000
Matches (thousand boxes)	1,550,000	n.a.
Meat (tons)	46,000	1,300,000
Butter (tons)	10,000	275,000
Fish catch (tons)	5,200	2,200,000
Alcohol (decalitres)	7,600,000	100,800,000

1 Tractor production:

Russian S.F.S.R.	82,000
Ukraine S.S.R.	25,000
Byelorussian S.S.R.	5,000
Total	112,000

Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

The post-war Five Year Plan is a programme encompassing both reconstruction and new construction. Its aim is not only to restore war devastated industry, but to exceed pre-war production. Some indication of the expansion involved may be obtained from a comparison between Table IX and the following table, which shows the pre-war output of certain products for Byelorussia compared with the output of the Soviet Union as a whole. The figures given refer, of course, to the former boundaries of the Byelorussian Republic.

TABLE X

Output of Certain Products in the B.S.S.R., 1932, and Planned Output for 1937 (metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Percentage of total U.S.S.R. output	
	1932	Planned for 1937	1932	Planned for 1937
Peat	800,000	2,100,000	6.06	8.47
Cement	n.a.	110,000		1.57
Meat	12,300	28,800	2.83	2.30

Source: Second Five Year Plan, Moscow, 1934, Vol. II, p.498.

185 433 Compared with 1940, the capacity of Byelorussian electric power stations in 1950 is to increase by 220 per cent.; peat production is to rise 127 per cent. above the 1940 output; the output of bricks and lime is to increase fourfold; and the production of tile is slated to be about nine times over 1940.

Among the twelve oblasts in the Republic, Minsk oblast is scheduled for the greatest industrial expansion. In the construction programme are new factories for the output of cloth, penicillin, Deft-ware, porcelain, peat briquettes, boilers, radiators, instruments, bicycles, motor trucks, and tractors. The 1950 output for the last three factories is to be 100,000 bicycles, 1,000 7-ton trucks and 5,000 tractors. In the city and environs of Minsk alone capital investments are scheduled at the rate of nearly one million roubles a day during the course of the five years.

Another area in which large developments are projected is Gomel oblast, which in 1950 is to produce 787,000 tons of peat, 90 million bricks and tiles, and five million square metres of window glass. (In 1928 the total Byelorussian output of window glass was estimated at 1,170,000 square metres.)

Forestry

137 According to the census of January 1, 1935, the forest area of the B.S.S.R. was 3,817,000 hectares, 22.9 per cent. of the area of the Republic, and 0.6 per cent. of the total forest area of the Soviet Union. Another 2,538,000 hectares were added to the B.S.S.R.'s forest area in 1939, when West Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union.

Timber

313 The production of commercial timber, largely pine, fir and oak, has been centred in the areas of Bobruisk, Mozyr, Borisov, and Polotsk. Timber is considered one of the most valuable of Byelorussia's natural resources, and has figured largely in her relatively insignificant export trade. In 1926-27, for example, an income of 20 million roubles was realized from export of timber, at a time when the Republic's budget totalled 80 million roubles, and the gross output of industry was valued at 133 million roubles. In 1924-25, the only year for which details on the export of timber are available, the timber shipped from the B.S.S.R. amounted to 587,000 cubic metres of firewood and 749,000 cubic metres of other timber. About 60 per cent. of this was sent to the Ukraine (within the U.S.S.R.) and the remainder, plywood, oak, pine, and other products, was shipped abroad via the Baltic States.

The advanced development of the timber industry in the B.S.S.R. is revealed by the number of sawing frames which the Republic had in pre-war years. As at April 1, 1939, (before the incorporation of Western Byelorussia) the B.S.S.R. possessed 256 of the Soviet Union's 6,500 frames.

313 This high proportion should be contrasted with the small forest area of this Republic in relation to that of the whole U.S.S.R.

185 The goal set for timber deliveries by the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is
313 11,100,000 cubic metres; and cuttings during the period 1946-50 are
● 433 planned at 58,400,000 cubic metres. The aggregate timber deliveries
attained during four and one-quarter years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-32, amounted to 32,600,000 cubic metres, or 7,670,000 annually. In 1928 it had been estimated that the timber resources of the B.S.S.R. were adequate to permit cuttings of 12 million cubic metres a year by 1932. This scale of cuttings was never reached, but the figure is mentioned here because it approximates the present plan of annual deliveries set for 1950, at a time when the area of Byelorussia is about double what it was in 1928.

The reason for this is that a large amount of easily accessible timber was burned out by the Germans during the war. The Governor of Vitebsk oblast, quoting from official figures, told members of the UNRRA Mission in June 1946 that 22 per cent. of the oblast was covered by good timber before the war but at present only 16 per cent. It was estimated by the Governor of Polotsk oblast that 46 percent. of the forests of the oblast were cut, burned or taken away during the war. Post-war cutting operations will therefore be restricted in many areas, and a reforestation programme will be carried out on an area of 189,000 hectares. Meanwhile, felling will be centred in the dense swamp areas previously untouched and impossible to exploit without extensive development of motor and narrow-gauge haulways provided for in the Five Year Plan.

Of the 1950 goal for timber production, 5 million cubic metres is set for annual production under the direction of the Timber Ministry of the B.S.S.R. An undisclosed amount will be produced under the auspices of local and co-operative industry. Although no full details are at present available, nevertheless, a few comparisons with pre-war production are possible. For example, in 1928 the production of plywood in Byelorussia amounted to 59,000 cubic metres, and in 1940 to 254,000 cubic metres (36.2 per cent. of the plywood output of the Soviet Union). In 1950 the plywood output of republican, local, and co-operative industry is scheduled to be 118,500 cubic metres. No pre-war figures are available for sawn lumber output, except for 1928, when 636,060 cubic metres were produced. The planned output of sawn lumber for 1950 is 1,800,000 cubic metres, nearly three times the 1928 amount.

[439] As for the export of timber, no figures are available, but it is known that Byelorussian timber has been and still is an important source of mine props for the Donets coal mines in the Ukrainian S.S.R.
313 However, in view of the tremendous shelter rehabilitation programme in
185 devastated Byelorussia, it does not seem likely that there will be much
surplus timber available. Of 400,000 collective farm houses scheduled for restoration, only 60,000 are to be built of brick. An equal, if not larger, number of public buildings were destroyed on collective farms;

313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or 6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons, or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the
U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans
systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had
eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were
then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the
U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced.
During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the
remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946,
when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had
one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing
at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many
processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which
are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing,
without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a
few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present
operations are carried out in the single building which has been
restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the
match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in
operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a
year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this
output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and
additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
372 pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

372 only one concrete mixer was observed. Before the war, the Borisov match factory had 5,000 workers; in June 1946, the number was only 700.

Peat

316 For most countries the output of peat may not be a significant index of industrialization. In Byelorussia, however, it has been and remains one of the primary indications. For example, 91 per cent. of the steam power plants erected during the first Five Year Plan were based on peat as a fuel. In addition to this use, large quantities of peat are to be used as fertilizer in the next five years.

135 At January 1, 1934, peat deposits in Byelorussia were estimated at 2,670 million tons, compared with 95,426 million tons in the entire Soviet Union. (Later estimates for the U.S.S.R. give the figure of 150,000 million tons, 48.5 per cent. of total world reserves.)

316 433 In 1932 the output of peat in the B.S.S.R. amounted to 834,000 tons (6.06 per cent. of Soviet Union output). Production in 1937 rose to 2,445,300 tons, and for 1940 was estimated at 3,260,000 tons. The Five Year Plan fixes the B.S.S.R.'s output of peat in 1950 at 4,162,000 tons, and provides that peat workings with an aggregate annual capacity of 1.6 million tons shall be put into operation, and peat briquette plants built with an annual capacity of 130,000 tons.

Textiles and Clothing

288 433 185 The textile industry of Byelorussia is centred in the Vitebsk and Mogilev areas, which saw extensive development under the pre-war Five Year Plans. No major change in the distribution is foreseen in the next five years, at the end of which Vitebsk and Polotsk oblasts, together with parts of Mogilev and Molodechno oblasts, are scheduled to contribute 83 per cent. of the Byelorussian textile output. Some of the production targets for 1950 are as follows:

Cotton cloth	2 million metres
Linen cloth	3 " "
Woollen cloth	1,660,000 metres
Carpet	1,254,000 metres
Plush	290,000 metres

The output of woollens, carpet, and plush is to be obtained from new factories scheduled for construction in Vitebsk, Minsk, and Grodno. Linen will be produced in restored factories; and it should be pointed out that the figure of three million metres is additional to a considerable output of linen cloth expected in 1950 from the restored linen combinat in Orsha, an enterprise under the management of the U.S.S.R. Textile Ministry. (In pre-war years, this linen mill, which was built during the first Five Year Plan), had a capacity of 14 million metres of cloth per year.)

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
433 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet
185 production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15 per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in
433 1950 is expected to be as follows:

185

Shoes	7 million pairs
Hosiery	13.5 " "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000 units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000 "

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme, has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk, facilities were estimated to be as follows,

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russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelorussian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agricultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications. Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per cent of the total territory.[34] 131 728 [133] ● [132]

There are but few small towns in Western Byelorussia; only two localities have about 50,000 inhabitants each, Grodno and Brest Litovsk. Originally 'Western Byelorussia' as it had emerged from the Molotov-Ribbentrop deal for the partition of Poland, had one town of 100,000 inhabitants, Bialystok, a centre of the Polish textile industry and the only place in the whole of 'Western Byelorussia' possessing a fairly large industrial class. For this reason, Bialystok was chosen as a kind of emergency capital of Western Byelorussia during the weeks between its occupation by the Red Army and its full incorporation into the B.S.S.R. The 'Peoples Assembly' of Western Byelorussia which on October 28th, 1939, formulated its 'request for admission into the U.S.S.R.' also met in Bialystok. 361

The new 'centre of Western Byelorussia' had the drawback that it had no Byelorussian population; it had only Polish and Jewish inhabitants and the outskirts of the town were Polish. In view of the national composition of Bialystok and its surroundings the Soviet Government was unable to maintain its claim to the Bialystok area after the end of the war, particularly since it was located to the east of the Curzon line which Russia adopted in principle as the Polish-Russian frontier. The area of Bialystok covering roughly 5,800 square miles was thus re-allocated to Poland. This transfer was advantageous for the Soviet Union since the B.S.S.R. rid itself thereby of a Polish population of 1,000,000 and thus considerably reduced the seriousness of the minority problem within its boundaries. 563 [128]

After the annexation of Western Byelorussia the minority issue threatened to cause considerable worry to the Minsk Government, since half of the annexed population were either Poles or Jews. In the post-war B.S.S.R. this problem no longer arose not only because of the substantial frontier rectification in Poland's favour in the Bialystok area,

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively 563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the 563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main 647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very [634] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no 665 557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

Prices and Wages

434 Detailed information on food rations in Byelorussia is not available, but they are believed to be similar to those in the Ukrainian S.S.R.[1]

435 443 Prices are controlled by the government and price levels vary with the type of market outlet rather than with the type of commodity. In the government ration stores prices are low. In all the main cities, however, there are also one or two special stores, so called "gastronomes", (which are also government operated); these sell unrationed goods at relatively high prices. Their stock consists in large part of luxury items (such as smoked salmon) but some of their commodities are the same as or comparable to those sold in the ration stores. Individuals may therefore supplement their rations of various commodities by purchases at the gastronomes if they are able and willing to pay the price. While the ration stores sell UNRRA food,[2] the entire stock of the gastronomes comes from Byelorussian or Soviet Union sources.

In addition to these stores, and to the special stores serving factory workers and those supplying extra rations at low prices to war invalids and expectant and nursing mothers, there are public markets in the principal cities. Here country people come to sell the allowed quota of their produce and second-hand goods are bought and sold. Prices resemble those in the gastronomes.

435 The difference in prices between the ration stores and the gastronomes in the summer of 1946 is illustrated in the following table.

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[1] See Operational Analysis Paper No. 39, Economic Rehabilitation in the Ukraine.

[2] In the late spring and summer of 1946 the foodstuffs (with the exception of bread and potatoes) sold in these shops was to a very great extent of UNRRA origin. Some estimates gave the UNRRA contribution as 70 per cent. of the turnover, but this figure has not been confirmed by the Byelorussian Government. Later the UNRRA percentage gradually decreased as the supply from Soviet sources increased.

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TABLE XV

435 Byelorussia: Prices in Ration Stores and Gastronomes, June 1946
(in roubles)

	Ration stores		Gastronomes	
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price
Cheddar cheese	kilogram	29.50[1]	kilogram	280.00
Sugar, granulated	"	5.00	"	120.00
Evaporated milk	14½ ounce can	2.60[1]	small can	70.00
Canned meat	" " "	17.50[1]	" "	55.00
Tea	100 grams	5.00	100 grams	22.50

[1] UNRRA supplies

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

465 In the same month (June 1946) the UNRRA Mission estimated the average monthly earnings of a semi-skilled urban worker to be approxim-
435 ately 500 roubles, while the average for skilled workers was some 300 roubles higher. Thus the purchasing power of the average worker in terms of free market prices was low; a kilogram of cheese would cost him half a month's earnings. However, many factories operate low-priced cafeterias and factory workers receive priority for clothing and housing. Those who exceed their production quota receive further privileges.

465 The following table gives the average monthly earnings in June 1946 of four Byelorussian factories as reported to UNRRA Mission observers by the factories' managers.

TABLE XVI

465 Average Monthly Earnings in Four Byelorussian Factories, June 1946
(in roubles)

Radio factory, Minsk	
Most skilful workers	1,500
Ordinary workers	800 to 850
Beginners	150 to 200
Match and plywood factory, Borisov	
Honour brigade	700
Average for all workers	500 to 600
Lowest paid workers	200 to 300
Garment factory, Vitebsk	
One cutter, exceptionally skilled	2,000
Cutters	1,200
Most skilful operators	600
Sewing machine operators	200 to 500
Brick factory, Polotsk	
Best workers	400 to 450
All workers	300
Lowest paid workers	250

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

435 In September 1946 a decree of the Government of the U.S.S.R. announced an increase in the price of rationed goods and a reduction in commercial prices (such as those charged in gastronomes). This measure was designed to facilitate the abolition at a later date of the rationing system and the establishment of one unified state price for all goods.

465 In order that the increase of ration prices should not fall too heavily on the lower income groups, workers earning less than 900 roubles a month were simultaneously granted a wage increase on a sliding scale, those earning less receiving a greater increase.[1]

The latest report received lists the following average wages paid in the B.S.S.R.

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[1] Increases were as follows: 110 roubles a month for those earning up to 300 roubles; 100 for those earning up to 500; 90 for those earning up to 700; 80 for those earning up to 900.

438 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern
factories arose. The timber industry was modernized and developed
433 for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

433 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent
a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective
241 farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had
their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives.
474 They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.3 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred
[728] from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941 -- Analyst]

III INDUSTRY

438 Before the Revolution, industry in Byelorussia was primitive, consisting mainly of small handicrafts, such as the making of homespun linen from locally produced flax, or the moulding of pottery by hand. Under the Soviet system, however, a fundamental reorganization took place in the whole U.S.S.R. Many areas whose natural resources had previously not been utilized now began to be more fully developed; modern methods of production were introduced throughout the Soviet Union; and as a result, the total industrial output increased about eightfold.

In Byelorussia, as well as in the other Soviet republics, many changes occurred. In place of the former handicraft shops, large modern factories arose, turning out increased amounts of textiles, lumber, paper, glass, bricks, pottery, and cement. The extraction of peat was carried out on a more extensive scale, and the processes mechanized. At the same time, the number of workers employed in industry increased rapidly.

Industrial Population

In 1925, three years before the first Five Year Plan was launched, the factories of Byelorussia were located mainly in Minsk, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Bobruisk, and Borisov. These five cities had a total of 16,000 factory workers employed for the most part in small shops (only three plants had more than 500 employees) and comprising three-quarters of the factory workers then in Byelorussia. The distribution of industry was as follows: textiles exclusively in Vitebsk; shoe and clothing factories in Vitebsk and Minsk; electrical in Minsk; metal-working in Minsk, Vitebsk, and Orsha; woodworking in Bobruisk, Borisov, and Mozyr.

By 1932, the end of the first Five Year Plan, there were altogether 52,000 industrial workers in the B.S.S.R., compared with 39,000 in 1926. Twenty-two thousand of these were employed in the clothing, knitted-goods, and shoe factories. The woodworking and wood chemical plants absorbed about 12,000; metalworking, 7,000; the food industry, 5,600; and peat plants, 4,400 workers. In another four years (1936) the number of workers employed in large industrial establishments had risen to a total of 155,200.

Growth of New Factories

Some of the largest industrial enterprises which were set up in the B.S.S.R. in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans (1928-41) were as follows:

• 438 Minsk. Two large machine construction factories, "Kirov" and "Voroshilov"; the "Bolshevik" leather factory; the "Kaganovich" footwear factory; the "October" clothing factory; a peat plant, and a brick plant.

Mogilev. The "Dimitrov" machine construction factory; the "Kirov" motorcar repair works; the "Kuibyshev" silk factory; the "Stalin" leather factory; a pipe foundry, and a peat plant.

Vitebsk. The "Krasny Metallist" machine tools factory; the "Clara Zetkin" hosiery; the "KIM" hosiery and knitted fabrics factory, employing 10,000 workers; the "Kaganovich" flax mills, and many textile factories.

Gomel. The "Stalin" glass factory; the "Trud" footwear factory; the "Vesuvji" match factory, and a knitted fabrics factory.

[433] Industrial output in this city increased 100 times in comparison with production before 1914. In addition to the large factories listed above, a big machine building works, "Proletary", produced turning lathes; and another large plant "Kaganovich", was constructed to turn out agricultural machines. Gomel being a large railway junction, railway truck building works and railway engine repair works were also built there.

Other cities. In the small towns of Byelorussia, where before 1917 there were no industrial enterprises at all, a number of plants were developed; for example, in Bobruisk, large wood processing and clothing factories; in Krichov, a large cement factory; and in Orsha, a flax mill, meat cannery and brick works.

433 Altogether, in the course of the pre-war Five Year Plans, industrial output in the B.S.S.R. increased considerably. The following table, reckoned in terms of 1926-27 prices, compares production in 1937 with the level of output in 1932.

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial ex-
185 pansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled,
they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial
output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest,
185 while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno.
Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station
on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at
the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier,
electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which
in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

313 This high proportion should be contrasted with the small forest area of this Republic in relation to that of the whole U.S.S.R.

185 The goal set for timber deliveries by the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is
313 11,100,000 cubic metres; and cuttings during the period 1946-50 are
433 planned at 58,400,000 cubic metres. The aggregate timber deliveries attained during four and one-quarter years of the first Five Year Plan, 1928-32, amounted to 32,600,000 cubic metres, or 7,670,000 annually. In 1928 it had been estimated that the timber resources of the B.S.S.R. were adequate to permit cuttings of 12 million cubic metres a year by 1932. This scale of cuttings was never reached, but the figure is mentioned here because it approximates the present plan of annual deliveries set for 1950, at a time when the area of Byelorussia is about double what it was in 1928.

The reason for this is that a large amount of easily accessible timber was burned out by the Germans during the war. The Governor of Vitebsk oblast, quoting from official figures, told members of the UNRRA Mission in June 1946 that 22 per cent. of the oblast was covered by good timber before the war but at present only 16 per cent. It was estimated by the Governor of Polotsk oblast that 46 percent. of the forests of the oblast were cut, burned or taken away during the war. Post-war cutting operations will therefore be restricted in many areas, and a reforestation programme will be carried out on an area of 189,000 hectares. Meanwhile, felling will be centred in the dense swamp areas previously untouched and impossible to exploit without extensive development of motor and narrow-gauge haulways provided for in the Five Year Plan.

Of the 1950 goal for timber production, 5 million cubic metres is set for annual production under the direction of the Timber Ministry of the B.S.S.R. An undisclosed amount will be produced under the auspices of local and co-operative industry. Although no full details are at present available, nevertheless, a few comparisons with pre-war production are possible. For example, in 1928 the production of plywood in Byelorussia amounted to 59,000 cubic metres, and in 1940 to 254,000 cubic metres (36.2 per cent. of the plywood output of the Soviet Union). In 1950 the plywood output of republican, local, and co-operative industry is scheduled to be 118,500 cubic metres. No pre-war figures are available for sawn lumber output, except for 1928, when 636,060 cubic metres were produced. The planned output of sawn lumber for 1950 is 1,800,000 cubic metres, nearly three times the 1928 amount.

• [439] As for the export of timber, no figures are available, but it is known that Byelorussian timber has been and still is an important source of mine props for the Donets coal mines in the Ukrainian S.S.R.
313 However, in view of the tremendous shelter rehabilitation programme in
185 devastated Byelorussia, it does not seem likely that there will be much surplus timber available. Of 400,000 collective farm houses scheduled for restoration, only 60,000 are to be built of brick. An equal, if not larger, number of public buildings were destroyed on collective farms;

Prices and Wages

434 Detailed information on food rations in Byelorussia is not available, but they are believed to be similar to those in the Ukrainian S.S.R.[1]

435 Prices are controlled by the government and price levels vary
with the type of market outlet rather than with the type of commodity.
443 In the government ration stores prices are low. In all the main
cities, however, there are also one or two special stores, so called
"gastronomes", (which are also government operated); these sell unrationed
goods at relatively high prices. Their stock consists in
large part of luxury items (such as smoked salmon) but some of their
commodities are the same as or comparable to those sold in the ration
stores. Individuals may therefore supplement their rations of various
commodities by purchases at the gastronomes if they are able and willing
to pay the price. While the ration stores sell UNRRA food,[2] the entire
stock of the gastronomes comes from Byelorussian or Soviet Union sources.

In addition to these stores, and to the special stores serving factory workers and those supplying extra rations at low prices to war invalids and expectant and nursing mothers, there are public markets in the principal cities. Here country people come to sell the allowed quota of their produce and second-hand goods are bought and sold. Prices resemble those in the gastronomes.

435 The difference in prices between the ration stores and the gastronomes in the summer of 1946 is illustrated in the following table.

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[1] See Operational Analysis Paper No. 39, Economic Rehabilitation in the Ukraine.

[2] In the late spring and summer of 1946 the foodstuffs (with the exception of bread and potatoes) sold in these shops was to a very great extent of UNRRA origin. Some estimates gave the UNRRA contribution as 70 per cent. of the turnover, but this figure has not been confirmed by the Byelorussian Government. Later the UNRRA percentage gradually decreased as the supply from Soviet sources increased.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

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Chapter II. The State Structure

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in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

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642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

692 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

Art. 91. District and city procurators are appointed by the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

Art. 92. The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

461 641 Art. 93. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 94. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of an eight-hour working day for factory and office workers, the reduction of the working day to seven or six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where working conditions are particularly arduous, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest-homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

407 tractors in time for either the spring or the autumn ploughing season in 1946. The first shipment of UNRRA tractors arrived in the Republic in December. Altogether, UNRRA expects to deliver about 800 tractors. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture gave the Mission an estimate that 20,000 15-horsepower tractor units would be needed to reorganize farm work on an adequate level of mechanization.[1]

In speaking of the need for farm machinery in this Republic, the UNRRA Mission said: "It is important to recognize that Byelorussian farming is not a hand-tool agriculture. Rehabilitation and recovery here does not mean a better hoe - it means a better tractor. It means more combine threshers, more grain drills and mechanized equipment. Rehabilitation of agriculture here means re-establishment of the pre-war rate of mechanization of farms, which, in turn, will release labour for still more tractor factories and still more industrialisation. Byelorussian farmers spaded by hand 200,000 hectares (half a million acres) in 1945 and half that amount in 1946. Such labours do great credit to the industry of the farmers, but a hungry Byelorussia and a hungry world will not be fed by such primitive farming methods."

Farm Buildings

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By the end of 1946 enough housing had been repaired or built in the B.S.S.R. to enable 250,000 families (about 1.5 million people) to move from dugouts or caves into houses. Rural schools had also been transferred from dugouts to new premises. The Byelorussian newspaper Sovietskaya Byelorussia (issues of December 17 and 34, 1946) reported that 254,000 houses had been restored in rural areas since liberation. Eighty-two thousand had been rebuilt in 1944, 112,000 in 1945, and 60,000 in 1946, and 45,556 houses were still in process of construction. As at the end of 1946, 10,000 rural families (50,000 people) were still living in dugouts and caves.

Farm Manpower

464 Besides the deplorable housing situation, which contributes to lowered work efficiency, there is a great shortage of labour. Since the war it is women rather than men who constitute the main labour force on Byelorussian farms. UNRRA Mission observations in mid-1946 gave a ratio of four to six women to every man. In some sections, 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women. On one farm visited the labour force consisted of five men, 75 women, and 21 young boys and girls. A total of 43 men from this one farm had been killed during the war.

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[1] The 15-horsepower unit is the common method of computing tractor numbers. Most Soviet tractors are larger than 15-horsepower, but a 45-horsepower machine would be considered, for example, as equivalent to three tractor units. An editorial in Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, January 8, 1947, stated that the average output per 15-horsepower tractor in 1946 was 338 hectares of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, which is 73 hectares higher than the average for 1945.

433 manufacturing linen from scraps. The aluminum factory in Borisov was making utensils, but the material available, all of which was supplied by UNRRA, was sufficient for only a small output.

Labour

• 464 As has already been noted, there is a shortage of all categories of workers. The outstanding characteristic of the present force is the high percentage of women and youthful workers. In the factories observed by the UNRRA Mission, from 75 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women and young people. Many of these are being trained in special schools.

The Five Year Plan in Industry

471 Under the new Five Year Plan for the rehabilitation of the Soviet economy, the volume of capital investments in the B.S.S.R. in 1946-50 is to be 6,950 million roubles, including 2,422 million for works under the Republic's jurisdiction. In the Soviet Union as a whole, capital investments for the same period are to amount to 250,300 million roubles, of which 157,500 million are to be used in industry.

433 185 The volume of production of Soviet industry in 1950 (the last year of the five year period) is fixed at 205,000 million roubles (in 1926-27 prices), an increase of 48 per cent. as compared with the 1940 output of 138,500 million roubles.

In Byelorussia, the volume of industrial goods produced by the Republic in 1950 is to exceed pre-war output by 16 per cent. The enterprises under the Republic's jurisdiction are to produce goods valued at 2,200 million, of which the output of state industries under local jurisdiction and of industrial co-operatives is to comprise 850 million roubles. The following table shows the physical goals fixed for Byelorussian industry under the Plan.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussiaRC1

S.U. 635 Be. 642 131/161 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be. 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

TABLE XV

435 Byelorussia: Prices in Ration Stores and Gastronomes, June 1946
(in roubles)

	Ration stores		Gastronomes	
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price
Cheddar cheese	kilogram	29.50[1]	kilogram	280.00
Sugar, granulated	"	5.00	"	120.00
Evaporated milk	14½ ounce can	2.60[1]	small can	70.00
Canned meat	" " "	17.50[1]	" "	55.00
Tea	100 grams	5.00	100 grams	22.50

[1] UNRRA supplies

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

465 In the same month (June 1946) the UNRRA Mission estimated the average monthly earnings of a semi-skilled urban worker to be approximately 500 roubles, while the average for skilled workers was some 300 roubles higher. Thus the purchasing power of the average worker in terms of free market prices was low; a kilogram of cheese would cost him half a month's earnings. However, many factories operate low-priced cafeterias and factory workers receive priority for clothing and housing. Those who exceed their production quota receive further privileges.

435

465 The following table gives the average monthly earnings in June 1946 of four Byelorussian factories as reported to UNRRA Mission observers by the factories' managers.

TABLE XVI

465 Average Monthly Earnings in Four Byelorussian Factories, June 1946
(in roubles)

Radio factory, Minsk	
Most skilful workers	1,500
Ordinary workers	800 to 850
Beginners	150 to 200
Match and plywood factory, Borisov	
Honour brigade	700
Average for all workers	500 to 600
Lowest paid workers	200 to 300
Garment factory, Vitebsk	
One cutter, exceptionally skilled	2,000
Cutters	1,200
Most skilful operators	600
Sewing machine operators	200 to 500
Brick factory, Polotsk	
Best workers	400 to 450
All workers	300
Lowest paid workers	250

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

435 In September 1946 a decree of the Government of the U.S.S.R. announced an increase in the price of rationed goods and a reduction in commercial prices (such as those charged in gastronomes). This measure was designed to facilitate the abolition at a later date of the rationing system and the establishment of one unified state price for all goods.

465 In order that the increase of ration prices should not fall too heavily on the lower income groups, workers earning less than 900 roubles a month were simultaneously granted a wage increase on a sliding scale, those earning less receiving a greater increase.[1]

The latest report received lists the following average wages paid in the B.S.S.R.

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[1] Increases were as follows: 110 roubles a month for those earning up to 300 roubles; 100 for those earning up to 500; 90 for those earning up to 700; 80 for those earning up to 900.

TABLE XVII

465

Average Monthly Earnings in Byelorussia, May 1947
(in roubles)

Government minister	3,000
Office manager)	1,200 to 1,500
Shop supervisor)	
Skilled cutter in garment factory	1,200 to 2,000
Chief cook	1,000
Assistant Cook	500
Chauffeur	700 to 800
Civil servant in government office	700 to 800
Skilled machine operator in	
radio factory)	700 to 800
match and plywood factory)	
garment factory)	
co-operative shoe artel)	
co-operative clothing factory)	
Waitress)	350
Charwoman)	
Factory apprentice (beginner)	200

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

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Proceeds of Sale of UNRRA Supplies

When UNRRA supplies are sold, the Byelorussian Government, in accordance with the terms of the UNRRA agreement, uses the proceeds for further relief and rehabilitation projects within the Republic. From December 1945 to the end of 1946, the net proceeds of sales (after deduction of distribution costs) amounted to 656,658,000 roubles, which were expended for health and welfare services; the rehabilitation of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; industry and utilities; and on social insurance.

433 manufacturing linen from scraps. The aluminum factory in Borisov was making utensils, but the material available, all of which was supplied by UNRRA, was sufficient for only a small output.

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313 and only 22,700 are to be rebuilt of brick. The remainder, totalling
over a million buildings of all kinds in the rural areas alone will be
185 rebuilt with timber. Urban shelter restoration will also require
large amounts of lumber. (In 1946 the "Komintern" woodworking combinat
in Bobruisk had milled 36,892 cubic metres of lumber, by October 27,
of which 27,000 cubic metres was earmarked for restoration work in
Minsk.)

471 Another indication of the current importance attached to the timber
industry is the fact that the largest investments in the 1946 state
313 budget for the B.S.S.R. were the 120,514,000 roubles allocated to the
timber industry. This represents 28 per cent. of the total capital
investments made in the Byelorussian budget for 1946.

Paper and Match Production

289 In 1937 paper production in the B.S.S.R. reached 57,100 tons, or
6.87 per cent. of the total paper production of the Soviet Union, which
was 831,600 tons. B.S.S.R. production of paper in 1932 was 28,700 tons,
or 6.09 per cent. of the total.

372 Pre-war match production in the B.S.S.R. was 28.9 per cent. of
total Soviet Union output. Output in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to be
433 1,550 million boxes, and depends on the restoration of the pre-war
factories. One of the largest match and plywood factories in the
U.S.S.R. before the war, was the plant at Borisov, which the Germans
systematically looted and destroyed. Before the war this factory had
eight automatic machines for the production of wood matches, which were
then widely exported, some being shipped to the United Kingdom and the
U.S.A. Plywood, box shook, and other wood products were also produced.
During the war four of the machines were removed to Germany, and the
remainder were demolished when the Germans retreated. In June 1946,
when the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia observed this factory, it had
one unit assembled from salvaged spare parts; and this unit was producing at the rate of 300,000 pocket-boxes of matches daily. Many
processes were being operated by hand.

The plant originally consisted of several buildings, most of which are still either in complete ruins or have only the walls standing, without windows or roofs. Concrete floor foundations remain, with a few imbedded iron bars to which pre-war machinery was bolted. Present operations are carried out in the single building which has been restored, and is covered with a new roof. At present, one-third of the match factory space, and one-fifth of the total floor space is in operation. Present plans call for an output of 600 million boxes a year by 1950, or 1,397,000 boxes a day. Before anything like this output can be achieved, several more buildings must be restored, and additional machinery must be procured. Moreover, the demolished
electric power plant adjacent to the factory must also be restored to
372 pre-war capacity. The Mission reported, however, that as at most
other factories, building restoration was almost entirely a hand process;

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl
[Constitution as of July, 1947.]

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE BELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The Soviets of Working People's deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists, the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the liberation of the Belorussian people from national oppression by tsarism and by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Belorussian nationalist counter-revolution, constitute the political foundation of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Art. 3. In the Belorussian SSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

● 471 Art. 4. The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the Belorussian SSR.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Belorussian SSR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people) or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a co-operative association).

475 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories,
421 mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large State-organized agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, belong to the whole people.

421 Art. 7. The common enterprise of collective farms and co-operative organizations, with their live stock and implements, and the products of the collective
474 farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organizations.

[472] In addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its ~~private~~ personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its ~~private~~ personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling house, live stock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

423 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their
474 use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

472 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the Belorussian SSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RC1 Belorussia RC1

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The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
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642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The Soviets of Working People's deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists, the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the liberation of the Belorussian people from national oppression by tsarism and by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Belorussian nationalist counter-revolution, constitute the political foundation of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Art. 3. In the Belorussian SSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the Belorussian SSR.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Belorussian SSR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people) or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a co-operative association).

475 421 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large State-organised agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, belong to the whole people.

421 474 Art. 7. The common enterprise of collective farms and co-operative organizations, with their live stock and implements, and the products of the collective farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organizations.

[472] In addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its ~~private~~ personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its ~~private~~ personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling house, live stock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

423 474 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

472 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the Belorussian SSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household

346 871 year notes that 466 thousand rubles were assigned for the construction of the Vetrinskaya school in the Polotskaya oblast', but only 195,000 rubles have been used so far, and that not advantageously. Unsuitable brick was supplied, which was used in the building of walls. When the builders noticed it, 25,000 bricks had to be torn down and new bricks used for rebuilding the walls. In this way at least 35 to 40 per cent of the means annually assigned for building schools is not used. This means that it is not enough to have Soviet rubles in store: school buildings must be assured of labor power and building material. And the schools are the last of all to receive these advantages. Financial means, labor power and building material are first assigned to constructions of military significance, as the Soviet rulers know very well.

[474] Apart from the state constructions, there exists in villages the so-called "method of the people's construction". This method is very simple. Beside many other economic campaigns the kolkhozniks /71/ of a rayon are bound to build with their own efforts and means several schools, clubs, reading rooms, bridges, etc. The paper Zviazda quotes as an example the Sharkovskiy rayon in the Polotskaya oblast', which accepted the obligation to build at the beginning of the school year, by the "method of the people's construction", five seven-grade and one elementary School, to expand the school capacity to one thousand student seats, carry out thorough repairs in six schools and less general repairs in forty-two schools. We have no information as to the way the kolkhozniks of the Sharkovskiy rayon fulfilled this colossal program. If with a budget of hundreds of thousand of rubles and with building material and labor power at the disposal of the rayon executive committees the building of schools goes on for several years, one wonders whether kolkhozniks with the "method of the people's construction" will be able to enrich the rayon at their own cost with six new seven-grade schools, expand the school capacity to one thousand seats, and repair all the schools in the rayon. Judging by the pace of the work in constructing schools, Belorussian children will have to study reading and writing in inadequate, cold, restricted schoolrooms for many years to come.

The Soviet authority has assigned the fuel supply and maintenance of schools in country localities to the local population. In the usual confusion and without any organization or building material, schools are not being repaired and are deteriorating. In a number of rayons,

438 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern
433 factories arose. The timber industry was modernised and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

483 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective
241 farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives.
474 They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.5 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred
[728] from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941-- Analyst]

TABLE IV

241 Byelorussian S.S.R.: Production of Principal Crops, 1932 and 1937
433 (thousand metric tons)

	Byelorussian Republic		Soviet Union	
	1932	1937	1932	1937
Wheat	77.4	202.6	20,310.0	46,860.0
Other grain	1,616.3	1,618.3	49,480.0	73,430.0
Total grain	1,693.7	1,820.9	69,790.0	120,290.0
Potatoes	5,061.0	7,005.6	43,070.0	65,630.0
Flax	57.4	71.4	500.0	n.a.

Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939; and Socialist Agriculture, Moscow, 1939.

Since the natural fertility of Byelorussian soil is not very high, improvements in the yields of various crops depend greatly on efficient cultivation, particularly on generous fertilizing, and other modern measures (including mechanization) which were widely applied on the farms of the U.S.S.R. during the collectivization of agriculture.

Collective Farms (Kolkhozes)

474 The greatest agricultural problems of the Soviet Union have been to increase the area under cultivation, to improve the methods of production, to raise yields per hectare as well as total production, and from this increased production, to insure that adequate supplies of food reach the towns and factories. The primary means of achieving these aims was the organization of individual farmers into collectives (kolkhozes), in which they could jointly maintain their livestock and work the land, using the most scientific methods of livestock breeding, soil cultivation, crop rotation and fertilizing, but above all, increasing the use of farm machinery. In the long run mechanization, with the replacement of horses by tractors, makes a greater area available for grain and other agricultural products such as potatoes and flax.

475 An outstanding feature of these new developments was the establishment of machine and tractor stations (M.T.S.), in which the government concentrated thousands of tractors, threshers, combines, and other large machines. The M.T.S., which had their own workshops and staffs of mechanics, carried out all the mechanized farm work for the collectives - ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. - in return for which they received fixed fees, payable in agricultural produce.

474 As a result of the growth of collectivization and the M.T.S., the need for human labour decreased; and the entire process of production was reduced to about half the number of work days required on individual farms. By the end of the second Five Year Plan (1938) there were 242,392 collective farms in the Soviet Union; 9,665 of them were located in Byelorussia. Altogether they cultivated 85 per cent. of the total area sown in the U.S.S.R. and produced the bulk of the grain, cotton, sugar, flax, and other raw materials required for the population, industry, and export. At the same time, the individual plots which the kolkhoz members were permitted to keep were furnishing a large part of the berries, fruit, and vegetables which appeared in the city markets.

There were two principal ways in which collective farms delivered agricultural products to the government: through payments in kind to the M.T.S. and the flour mills; and through direct sales of a certain quota. Whatever remained after the fulfilment of the quota, the collectives could distribute among their members.

As has been said, the Byelorussian Republic by 1938 had 9,665 collective farms, which in that year cultivated 2.8 million of the 3.3 million hectares sown in the Republic. That is, Byelorussian kolkhozes were responsible for tilling nearly 85 per cent. of the cultivated area of the Republic in 1938, while the machine and tractor stations were serving nearly 87 per cent. of the total crop area, not only the collectives, but some individual farms as well.[1] In the B.S.S.R. the number of M.T.S. had steadily increased from 63 in 1932 to 200 by 1937, and just before the German attack in June 1941 there were 342 machine and tractor stations in the Republic. The increase after 1937 was largely due to the growth of mechanization in Western Byelorussia, where under the Soviet system more than 100 of these stations were organized. (See next section.) [1]

407 A large number of machines was available in the Republic before the war, both in the M.T.S. and on individual farms. From 1932 to 1937 the number of tractors in the B.S.S.R. grew from 3,200 to 8,100; and by June 1941 the Republic had 12,000 tractors. In 1932 there had been only four harvesting combines in operation in Byelorussia; by the end of 1937 the number had risen to 674; and in June 1941 the Republic had 1,500 combines and 2,300 threshers at work. In addition to tractors and combines, trucks have also played an important part in the mechanization of Byelorussian agriculture. By 1938 the Republic possessed 4,237 trucks for farm purposes; and their total carrying capacity was reckoned at 7,600 tons. (Compare 195,800 trucks in the U.S.S.R. as a whole, with 352,100 tons carrying capacity.) At the

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[1] According to a recent statement by the Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture, work on the cropland "before the war" was 60 per cent. mechanized. This lower percentage is explained by the fact that up to June 1941 Western Byelorussia was still in process of mechanization, and far behind other regions of the B.S.S.R.

[1] [See cat 116, pp 26-27 -- Analyst]

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

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311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241
423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474
[475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

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241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

Destruction of the Lenin Collective Farm[1]

474 The Lenin Collective Farm consisting of three villages and one sub-village, comprises an area of 1,500 hectares situated about 30 kilometres south of Minsk. It was organized in 1930 with 100 households, which had increased to about 200 by the outbreak of the war. At present there are 172 households with a population of 572 persons, of whom 208 are workers. Of these workers, only 57 are men. This proportion is explained partly by the shortage of men, and partly by the fact that a number of men reside in the village but work off the farm. There are 150 school children, and the remainder of the population are pre-school children, aged persons, and invalids.

474 727 During the German occupation, enemy forces were not situated in these villages; but punitive expeditions would come at intervals from Minsk, surround a village, and proceed to terrorize and kill the inhabitants. On at least one occasion the villages were bombed. The local people believe that the Germans were using the villages for target practice. In all, 177 people were killed during the war, of whom 20 were killed while fighting at the front, and the rest were civilians. Eight entire families were destroyed, and every family without exception suffered the loss of one or more members. Numerous children were orphaned.

The people remained on the farm during the first year of German occupation; then in the summer of 1942 they all fled to the forests - 70 leaving in a single day - and did not return to the farm until after liberation in 1944. Seventy-five members of the collective were partisans, in addition to those who served in the army.

The farm was thus completely abandoned for two years. The people returned late in the summer of 1944 to find their farm stripped of machinery, most of the barns and sheds burned, and nearly half of the dwellings destroyed. All the livestock not removed to the woods with the people had been either killed or driven off by the Germans before their retreat. The following losses were enumerated by the Collective Farm Chairman:

Dwellings. Seventy-two houses, including adjacent sheds; a clubhouse with accommodation for 160 people; and a large schoolhouse.

Barns and stables. Three large grain barns; three stables for horses; two stables for cows (120 animals capacity each); a pig shelter large enough for 150 animals; and a poultry farm with capacity for 260 hens.

Machinery and tools. Four tractors; three straw cutters; one silage cutter; two root cutters for making fodder; one clover thresher; one three-ton truck; and three narrow-row seeders.

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[1] Report by Davis McEntire, UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, December 13, 1946.

474 727 The farmers had hidden their ploughs, harrows, and small implements so that these were available with which to begin farming again in 1944; but all the heavy equipment was lost. Livestock losses amounted to 500 cattle, 125 horses, approximately 1,000 pigs, and about 800 sheep and goats. The peasants had taken their horses into the forests, and of those, 40 were brought back at liberation. These 40 horses and four cows were the sum total of livestock on hand at liberation.

In 1944, owing to the lateness of the season and to lack of implements, seeds and livestock, the farmers were able to sow only a very small part of their land. Most of the area brought into cultivation that first year had to be spaded by hand, because there was no draught power. In 1945 the farmers succeeded in bringing half of their their cropland under cultivation, still substituting hand spading for ploughing to a considerable extent.

As stated earlier, the area of this collective is 1,500 hectares. About 200 lectares are in meadows, 69 hectares in woods, and 421 hectares in pastures, gullies, and roads. The pre-war crop area was 810 hectares, and in 1946, this had been largely restored, except for hops, but not the pre-war yields. The following table shows the areas of cultivation in 1945 and 1946.

TABLE V

241 474 Lenin Collective Farm, Minsk Raion, Byelorussian S.S.R.: Crop Areas in 1945 and 1946
(in hectares)

Grain	1945		1946	
Oats	125		155	
Barley	75		75	
Wheat	25		19	
Winter rye	nil		186	
Winter wheat	"		8.5	
Buckwheat	10		8	
Total grain		235		451.5
Potatoes	100		94	
Vegetables	20		14	
Lupin (sown with rye)	nil		(83)	
Lupin (for seed)	10		9	
Clover	nil		90	
Hops	"		2[1]	
Total area sown		365		660
Fallow		445		150
Total cropland		810		810

[1] Pre-war area of hopyard, 4.5 hectares

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

474 Special mention should be made of the hopyard, which before the war was a very profitable enterprise, bringing in a gross income of 65,000 roubles in 1940. The hops died out during the war and were replanted in 1946; they are expected to produce a marketable crop this year (1947).

433 Productivity of the Lenin collective farm[1] in 1946 was down to 40 per cent. below pre-war yields. The grain yield was 1,0 to 1.2
241 metric tons per hectare, compared with yields of 1.6 to 1.8 tons per hectare before the war. The potato crop was only 8 tons per hectare,
474 half the pre-war yield of 16 tons, because the farm had unusually bad luck with potatoes in 1946, several fields being washed out completely.

The extreme decline is attributed to shortages of artificial fertilizers, formerly used in large amounts; the shortage of manure, resulting from the greatly diminished livestock herds; and the lack of machinery and manpower.

Ploughing is shallower than before the war; and seed bed preparation, less careful. The farmers realize that their ploughing and seed bed preparation are below the standards of good farm practice, but they are unable to do better until they get more tractors, implements, and horses. Before the war this farm customarily hired three or four tractors from the M.T.S.; in 1946 it was able to secure only one. Only 86 horses were available in 1946, and these on the average were smaller than before the war, and could not be fed as well. However, productivity in 1946 was greater than in the preceding year, chiefly because the farm had more men, more horses, and more equipment.

The Extent of the Post-War Recovery

433 In the Byelorussian Republic as a whole the crop year 1945 was the
241 first full year of reoccupation by Byelorussians. By 1946 agricultural production had made definite progress toward supplying the population with food. The sown area in 1946 reached 76 per cent. of pre-war, but the level of yields was depressed by inadequate soil preparation, shortages of fertilizers, and unfavourable weather. As a result the grain crop, although better than in 1945, was still only half of pre-war. The vegetable crop, grown largely from UNRRA seeds, was from 75 to 80 per cent. of pre-war in total production; while the potato crop, because rainfall was heavy during part of the growing season and because plantings were only 60 per cent. of pre-war, reached less than half pre-war in total output.

Seed Production

433 The inadequacy of seed supplies has been a serious hindrance to
246 full recovery of the pre-war area of cultivation. Particularly short were vegetable seeds (except potatoes), clovers, vetch, and timothy and other grasses, most of which are biennials or perennials requiring two years for the production of seed. There is also a shortage of flax seed;

[1] [See cat 116, pp 15-[illegible] Analyst]

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

● 474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,[1] taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter. [647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

185
433 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the R.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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1 Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

1 [In 1946--Analyst]

648 UNRRA clothing and contributed clothing are distributed free. The local soviet in each instance prepares a list of persons eligible to receive such clothing. Otherwise, textiles and shoe leather supplied to Byelorussia under the UNRRA programme are converted into clothing and shoes at local co-operatives, or artels, which perform an important role in the production of consumers' goods in the Republic.

•474 295 Typical of the producer co-operatives engaged in processing UNRRA-supplied textiles in the Novy Put Clothing Artel in Minsk which UNRRA Mission observers visited in November 1946. At this artel, garments were being made for war orphans cared for in children's homes. The finished garments were then distributed free of charge to the children, the government paying the artel for the cost of manufacture only.

Orders for the manufacture of clothing at this artel can be placed by organizations or by individuals; and as a general rule, the customer supplies his own materials and pays the artel only the established production cost. On orders placed by individuals, the production prices are, for a child's winter coat, 75 roubles,[1] for a woman's winter coat, 275 roubles, and for a man's winter coat, 250 roubles. Men's jackets are manufactured for 85 roubles, and trousers, for 45. Orders placed by organizations or wholesale outlets receive a 20 per cent. reduction on this scale.

The artel is organized on a co-operative profit-sharing basis. Its members are the workers employed in its shops and offices. In addition to their share in the artel's annual income, the member-workers are also paid regular wages for work performed. The monthly earnings of the employees in this artel were said to average 500 roubles. Earnings as high as 2,000 roubles a month were cited for cutters, but the majority of skilled workers earn from 600 to 1,200 roubles montly.

The artel "Novy Put" was first organized in 1928, during the first Five Year Plan. Before the German invasion in 1941, it had a membership of 400 workers, and in addition to the main establishment, it had four branches in various districts of Minsk. The membership, composed largely of Jews, suffered a very high casualty rate during the war; 90 per cent. were said to have perished at the hand of the Germans. In July 1944, shortly after the liberation of Minsk, the artel was re-organized; and it has been steadily growing both in membership and in output. By July 1, 1946, it had 110 workers.

The shoe artels are organized along the same general pattern as the clothing artels. In November 1946 the Red Shoemaker artel in Minsk was turning out a thousand pairs of workers' shoes and three thousand pairs of children's shoes per month.[2] The present membership

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[1] 5.40 roubles equal one U.S. dollar; 21.36 roubles equal one pound sterling.

[2] UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population,,as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of
742 drugs and equipment had been shipped. The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

TABLE IV

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433

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Sources: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1936 and 1939; Sown Areas of the U.S.S.R., Moscow, 1939; and Socialist Agriculture, Moscow, 1939.

Since the natural fertility of Byelorussian soil is not very high, improvements in the yields of various crops depend greatly on efficient cultivation, particularly on generous fertilizing, and other modern measures (including mechanization) which were widely applied on the farms of the U.S.S.R. during the collectivization of agriculture.

Collective Farms (Kolkhozes)

474 The greatest agricultural problems of the Soviet Union have been to increase the area under cultivation, to improve the methods of production, to raise yields per hectare as well as total production, and from this increased production, to insure that adequate supplies of food reach the towns and factories. The primary means of achieving these aims was the organization of individual farmers into collectives (kolkhozes), in which they could jointly maintain their livestock and work the land, using the most scientific methods of livestock breeding, soil cultivation, crop rotation and fertilizing, but above all, increasing the use of farm machinery. In the long run mechanization, with the replacement of horses by tractors, makes a greater area available for grain and other agricultural products such as potatoes and flax.

475 An outstanding feature of these new developments was the establishment of machine and tractor stations (M.T.S.), in which the government concentrated thousands of tractors, threshers, combines, and other large machines. The M.T.S., which had their own workshops and staffs of mechanics, carried out all the mechanized farm work for the collectives - ploughing, sowing, harvesting, etc. - in return for which they received fixed fees, payable in agricultural produce.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE BELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The Soviets of Working People's deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists, the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the liberation of the Belorussian people from national oppression by tsarism and by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Belorussian nationalist counter-revolution, constitute the political foundation of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Art. 3. In the Belorussian SSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the Belorussian SSR.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Belorussian SSR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people) or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a co-operative association).

475 421 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large State-organized agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, belong to the whole people.

421 474 Art. 7. The common enterprise of collective farms and co-operative organizations, with their live stock and implements, and the products of the collective farms and co-operative organizations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organizations.

[472] In addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its ~~private~~ personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its ~~private~~ personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling house, live stock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

423 474 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

472 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the Belorussian SSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10 The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241
311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was re-joined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241
423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474
● [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganised and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727
241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

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Transport

Railways

496 In 1928 the length of the railways in the B.S.S.R. was 2,500 kilometres; in 1932 - 3,000 kilometres; and in 1937 - 3,100 kilometres.[1] In 1937 the railways of Western Byelorussia had a length of 3,415 kilometres, according to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, published by the Polish Ministry of Information, London, 1941.

Roads

727 During the war, both railroads and motor roads suffered devastation and demolition at the hands of the Germans. The following extract from an UNRRA Mission report of June 1946 conveys the situation with respect
491 to roads in the B.S.S.R.:

"In the cities visited and along the roads travelled by the Mission party during our 700-mile motor trip, all bridges and culverts had been destroyed. What had once been reinforced concrete and steel spans across the Berezina at Borisov, the Dnieper at Orsha, and the western Dvina at Vitebsk and Polotsk, are now reduced to rubble piers in the river beds and demolished approaches. Substantial wooden bridges, resting on log piers, have been erected at the main crossings, and remain today much as they were when first built in 1944 by the Red Army advancing westward. Some destroyed bridges have not been replaced at all, and river crossings are effected only by boat. Small bridges and culverts have been largely replaced by temporary plank crossings, and there are still numerous winding detours around culverts that remain unrepaired on less frequented roads.

"In our trip we travelled over three kinds of road surfacing: handpacked dirt, cobblestone, and asphalt. The Minsk-Moscow three-lane asphalt highway is in good repair over the stretch covered from Minsk to Orsha, and along the roadside we observed several road repair gangs with asphalt pots and two or three road rollers, of the trailer type. Elsewhere we travelled over cobblestone and dirt roads, all of which were in fairly good condition but are still pitted with remnant shell holes and numerous ruts, which in rainy weather are difficult to pass through. One trip which we planned to make, from Lepel to Bigomel, the partisan city which never surrendered to the Germans, had to be abandoned at the last minute because the bridge at the main river crossing en route had been blown up by the Germans and was not yet restored. Although road repair equipment could be used to good effect along the dirt and cobblestone roads, not more than half a dozen pieces of such equipment were observed during the entire trip, after leaving the Minsk-Moscow highway."

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[1] Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

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[1] Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

•508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

648 to the people in greatest need. Throughout the republic in ration stores, children's homes, hospitals, and rural communities, UNRRA food furnished the greater part of the Byelorussian diet in 1946, apart from domestically produced cereals and bread.

Clothing

511 In June 1946 the UNRRA Mission described the urgent need of the Byelorussians for clothing in these words: "The need for clothing is obviously acute. Most people are wearing old, patched up, and ragged clothes. At least half the urban residents seen on the streets and considerably more rural people are going barefoot. Those who have shoes to wear endeavour as much as possible to economize on shoe leather, and it is a common sight to see people walk barefoot where the road or street is smooth, meanwhile carrying their shoes slung over the shoulder ready for use when the road gets rough and rocky. At three factories visited, about half the workers were barefoot, and the remainder were wearing chiefly canvas shoes in poor condition....At the children's homes visited, the children as a rule were sleeping two in a single bed, narrow army-style cots, because of the shortage of blankets and bed linen."

648 The following table of clothing shipments to January 31, 1947, shows that finished footwear and shoe leather, and raw wool and woollen textiles formed a large part of the clothing programme for the B.S.S.R.

TABLE XIII

UNRRA Shipments of Clothing to Byelorussia up to January 31, 1947

	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Finished clothing	368	222
Blankets and comforters	252	139
Cotton textiles	278	154
Woollen textiles	1,288	524
Raw wool	1,134	1,244
Footwear	2,446	1,688
Upper leather	380	173
Sole leather	558	773
Miscellaneous textiles	80	58
Miscellaneous footwear	163	366
Unclassified	62	-
Totals	7,009	5,346

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

To certain classes of priority consumers for example, war orphans in children's homes, widowed mothers, war invalids, and factory workers,

871 on the basis of a full seven-year school. The system also planned to have technical schools opened with three-or four-year courses of study for the preparation of semi-qualified specialists. Professional and technical schools were based upon this seven-year system of general education and were the final link in the system of secondary education. The next level comprised institutions of higher education -- the universities and higher technical institutes. /8/ The night schools for adults were also adapted to the system of national education.

Periodicals and Cultural Activities

● 517 The many-sided cultural activity was a powerful stimulus for attracting the masses, particularly the youth. Youth was fired with the idea of a rebirth of the national culture.* The number of poets, writers, critics, scientific workers in history and geography, in the search for natural resources and in the studying of various kinds of problems grew tremendously in Belorussia. The Belorussian Academy of Sciences, the University, and the Agricultural Academy followed watchfully, occasionally challenging but always supporting the bold initiative of young innovators in literature, art, and research. The Belorussian State Publishing House did not refuse to publish the work of young poets and scholars, counting on their further development. The attentive attitude of national figures toward the young cadres inspired their efforts and distracted them from the often rather difficult living conditions.

204 The newspapers Zvezda /The Star/ and Sovetskaia Belorussia /Soviet Belorussia/ were printed in Minsk,* the first was considered a Party organ and the second an organ of the Soviet power. Local papers were also printed in the surrounding towns, and eventually each rayon had its own newspaper. Zvezda /The Star/ was considered the most influential although in reality its influence was determined largely by a certain fear of becoming an object of treatment on its pages. As it was a Party organ, Zvezda /The Star/ made pretensions to the infallibility and unimpeachibility of everything printed in it. It copied the general line of the Moscow Pravda and made every effort to imitate it. Newspapers were also printed in the Hebrew and in Polish. The popular literary-social magazine Polymia /The Flame/ Molodniak, /Youth/ Uzvysha /Upwards/. Polymia had an influence upon the formulation of a national

*[Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

814 [661] literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovsh china) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

● 517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

21; Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517 ●
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [661]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [101]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [92]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

661 published by the Leningrad Publishing House in 1948. On the orders of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gei, "brigades" were formed in the Academy of Sciences, and they meticulously searched through publications, mimeographed speeches, and addresses for elements of National-Democracy. The prose and poetry, as well as newspaper articles, of writers and poets suspected of "Natsdemovshchina" were subjected to careful scrutiny and inspection. Besides those who were arrested, other, so-called "unexposed" National-Democrats, were smoked out. The attacks were transformed into persecution, and as a result of this badgering the famous Belorussian poet, Ianka Kupala, became desperate and attempted to kill himself after the manner of the Japanese samurais. School texts were leafed through carefully, and most of them withdrawn from circulation -- especially reading chrestomathies, grammars, and collections of dictations. Some were withdrawn automatically upon the arrest of the author and independent of their content, while others were banned as being considered inappropriate to the era of collectivization in agriculture and the Five-Year Plans. In the reading
626 chrestomathies examples of private farmers either in small villages
872 or isolated homesteads were not permitted. /31/ Nor were the arithmetical problems ever taken from the life of an independent farmer. The teachers themselves had to make up problems using the kolkhoz life or cooperative trade as a base. Moreover, only high quality produce or well-fattened stock could appear in the problems. Similarly, with regard to cooperative trade, only examples which affirmed its superiority over private trade could be employed. Some teachers, especially in the provinces, who were not sufficiently experienced in the subtleties of this Soviet policy were not only fired from their jobs but even arrested for using the following sort of example in a dictation. "Three lean kolkhoz cows were grazing in a meadow." All these switches and changes unquestionably had their impact upon the quality of work done in the schools, but educational leaders were held less responsible for the absence of textbooks than for using ones which were "ideologically inconsistent."

Theater repertoires were also subjected to severe inspection.*
661 Everything even remotely reminiscent of Belorussian nationalism
536 disappeared from the stage, the artistic value of the play notwith-
626 standing. The First Belorussian Theater was forbidden to give Na Kupale, /On St. John's Eve/, a marvellous fairy-tale based on the national folk legend of the search for the "flower of luck" on the

*[After 1930, cf. pp. 32-33, category re-analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka', a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also taken off the stage.

They* even turned their attentions to the travel ing theater
661 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
545 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could
626 thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations. The travel ing company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles. The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes: white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs. Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket, only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523
A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

* [official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 — Analyst]

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
626 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

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1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

the Byelorussian people to acquire both the inexhaustible cultural 665 treasures of the Russian people and the great cultural values created by 186 the Socialist Revolution'.

At the same time,* Stalin's opponents among the Byelorussian com- 513 munists were accused of having been too liberal to the Polish minority in Byelorussia, a strange accusation from a party which professes to adhere to an internationalist ideology. The 'polonizing activities' of the Byelorussian 'Trotskyites, Bukharinites and national-fascists' consisted in having allowed a number of localities in Byelorussia to conduct their business in the Polish language and in having sanctioned the existence of a number of Polish schools.[33]

The purge of the Byelorussian communists terminated the policy of tolerance which the Byelorussian Government had shown towards its national minorities. This tolerance had been symbolically expressed in [186] the coat of arms of the Byelorussian S.S.R., which contained the inscription 'Workers of the World Unite' in four languages: Byelorussian, Great Russian, Yiddish and Polish. The coat of arms in use since 1937 shows the same inscription in Byelorussian and Great Russian only. Together with the Polish inscription in Byelorussia's coat of arms the 'Polish National District' of the Byelorussian S.S.R. likewise disappeared. This district had served purposes similar to those of the 'Polish National District' of the Ukraine. It was called after Feliks Dzerzhinsky.

KOLAS AND KUPALA – BYELORUSSIAN LEADERS

The history of the fight between the Kremlin and Byelorussian nation- 186 alism includes the interesting case of the two prominent poets and 538 writers, Yanko Kupala (1882-1942) and Yakub Kolas, whom the Soviet ● régime drew over to the side of the 'proletarian revolution'. Both belonged to the petty bourgeois Byelorussian nationalist movement grouped around the weekly *Nasha Niva* (Our Cornfield) which long before the October Revolution was the first publication to advocate autonomy for the Byelorussian people.

Kupala was the son of an impoverished nobleman unable to pay for a higher education for his son. Kolas was of peasant origin. Kupala and Kolas had in common their violent hatred of the Polish landowners who owned over 6,000,000 acres of Byelorussian soil in 1914. As a symbolic challenge to the Poles they both threw off their Polish-sounding family names of Lutsevich and Mitskevich respectively and became known under their literary pseudonyms.

Kupala and Kolas found it difficult to overcome their 'bourgeois prejudices'. In their innermost feelings they remained nationalists however hard they tried to be 'good Soviet citizens'. In one of his poems

*[Cf. category 186, pp. 155-157--Analyst]

Be. 186 538 Kupala avowed his incapacity to become a real Bolshevik poet, thinking in terms of the whole Soviet Union and of all mankind:

> 'My Fatherland – it is the whole world,
> I have torn myself away from my native soil!
> Yet still I am not free from it – in sleep
> I dream of Byelorussia!'

The role which Kolas and Kupala played in Soviet Byelorussia is unparalleled throughout the U.S.S.R. No Byelorussian Bolshevik ever assumed the role of a national leader of the Byelorussians – the leadership was in the hands of Kolas and Kupala. Instead of 'removing' the two poets, the Soviet régime tried to direct their poetic creation into the 'right channels' and to use them for communist propaganda. Kolas and Kupala were often criticized, at times they seem to have been in disgrace but they never disappeared, as did many excellent writers and poets of almost all the major peoples of the Soviet Union.

S.U. [661] The purge of Kolas and Kupala[1] would have been tantamount to the bankruptcy of the Soviet cultural policy in the B.S.S.R., since the two were not only outstanding literary figures but actually cultural 'awakeners' of their people. Byelorussia could do without its 'national democrat' historians and folklorists, it could do without its leading communist politicians. Kolas and Kupala, however, were indispensable. Their case showed that there are limits even to purges in the Soviet Union. The purge in Byelorussia could not be carried so far as to endanger the cultural foundations of the third largest people of the Soviet Union. This is why Kolas and Kupala were spared despite all their 'sins' and 'deviations'.

The Soviet régime needed Kolas and Kupala not only as pillars of Byelorussian culture in the U.S.S.R. but also as the political heralds of Byelorussian irredentism which might evoke a response among the oppressed Byelorussian population of Poland. The two poets did indeed fulfil this task not as Bolsheviks but as nationalists and denounced most violently the partition of Byelorussia. Most typical in this respect was a poem by Kolas in which he cried out: 'Our homeland has been broken up by foreign robbers . . . Away with their frontiers! Down with their barriers! To us belong the fields and woods! Let us rise together with one mind and one will, happiness and freedom will not come to us of themselves! Long enough have we been hunted and driven from our homeland!'

'GREATER BYELORUSSIA'

Be. 131 728 In September 1939 came the triumph for people like Kolas and Kupala,[2] who by the force of circumstances had abandoned national democracy and embraced some sort of Byelorussian national communism–Byelo-

[1] [Cf. cat. 116, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]
[2] [Cf. Category 538, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]

7: Krushinsky - 10 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

204 consciousness as had Uzvysha upon the development of literature and art. Others were also published, and Molodniak was directed especially at youth. There were also departmental magazines, the organ of the Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. , As'veta /Education/ was well known.

545 A special topic should be devoted to the development of the theatrical art.[2] In any mention of the successful development of the Belorussian national theatres, the very old First Belorussian Theater in Minsk deserves attention. Up until 1930, it was original in its creative work. With very infrequent exceptions it gave translated plays. It promoted a series of talented artists. /9/ The second Belorussian Theater was organized out of studios. A special role must be assigned to the Belorussian Traveling Theater which was organized and directed by the enthusiast Vladislav Golubok. Golubok was a man of many talents. He wrote several plays based on Belorussian national life which ran for long periods. and were removed from the repertoire of the Traveling Theater when the general destruction of everything national in Belorussia began. The services of V. Golubok and his theater to the Belorussian nation are exceptionally great. During its existence it made tours not only of the cities but even of the most inaccessible villages and hamlets under conditions which, materially and otherwise, were most difficult. The productions of the Traveling Theater were in accordance with the tastes of the national masses, always being accompanied by folksongs, music, and fold dancing. V. L. Golubok was deservedly the first person in Belorussia to acquire the title of national artist. In 1937 he was arrested by the N. K. V. D.

The Minsk Jewish Theater under the talented direction of Rafal'skii also enjoyed well-earned fame in Belorussia. It presented a series of plays on national themes. Among the Jews the play "Girsh Lekert" was particularly popular as it portrayed the hero, Girsh Lekert, of the revolutionary struggle in 1902 against the Tsarist government in Wilno.

814 The efforts of Belorussian and Jewish composers and collectors of folksongs, music, and folk dancing deserved particular attention. Their work at this time[1] was very opportune and is of colossal value. This aspect of the national folk culture had been neither investigated nor written down before the revolution . . . In ten or fifteen years, collectivization would have absorbed the beautiful national art of the Soviet, artifically created, 'chastushka, ' composed by obliging

[1] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category IIC—Analyst]

814 literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of [661] folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovshchina) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka', a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also taken off the stage.

They? even turned their attentions to the traveling theater
661 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
● 545 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could
626 thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations. The traveling company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles. The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes: white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs. Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket, only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523 A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

?[official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 — Analyst]

661 kept in operation through private donations. Belorussian students
553 could not enter the higher schools. The national social organization
"Belorusskaia Gramada," which had 120,000 members, was closed
and its leaders tried and imprisoned. The Orthodox clergy had to use
Polish to preach in the churches and to teach the Law of God in the
schools. The population of western Belorussia knew that in the B. S.
S. R. a state was being built, that /17/ the official language was
Belorussian, that a Belorussian Academy of Sciences, a State Univer-
sity, and other institutions of higher learning were in existence and
that admission to them did not present any particular difficulties--
on the contrary there were the so-called workers' high schools which
prepared those who lacked secondary education for admission into
the universities. National theaters were in operation, and literature
661 and poetry flourished. The Soviet press, which penetrated into western
-166 Belorussia, as well as the radio and underground Communist organi-
zations intensified their propaganda about the work in the B. S. S. R.
The Soviet Consulate in Warsaw, by using the Deputy Consul Ul'ianov
who was himself from a Minsk family, generously supplied dollars to
finance anti-Polish propaganda, the pro-Communist press, and various
organizations in western Belorussia. As a result of this, hundreds of
young people streamed across the border into the B. S. S. R., illegally
and at great risk and danger to themselves, in the hopes of getting
into the bright lecture halls of the University of Belorussia. The
intelligentsia also crossed the border to find work and to find some
scope for their abilities. How much bitter disillusionment there
was after 1930, how much inconsolable grief and sorrow for their
unfulfilled hopes and broken young lives. Led by their enthusiasm,
they trustingly dashed into the perfidious and deceiving Soviet flame.
Who could have supposed then that this great constructive work would
be pitilessly crushed and that thousands of Belorussians would perish
in the cellars of the N. K. V. D. or in concentration camps.

First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Community Party of Belorussia

665 Up to 1930 there were several first secretaries of the Communist Party
of Belorussia. All of them were envoys of the Kremlin, in fact plenipo-
tentiaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet
Union--guardians, preservers and exponents of the general line of the

871 even in those of the oblast', there are often people who have no
875 adequate pedagogical experience or even any education. Moreover, people who have nothing to do with pedagogy, who turned up by chance, people who are not conscientious, often hold leading teaching positions." This is how Zviazda of July 9th, this year, characterizes the administrative workers who are directing the schools in the Belorussian Soviet Republic.

875 The legal position of the Soviet teacher is unbearably difficult,
554 particularly in villages. He is presented with many demands of all kinds, and at the same time no one accepts him. A great deal of additional social work is laid upon him, ahd at the same time he has no rights. The teacher must necessarily be an "active citizen, a public worker". The activity and public spirit of the teacher is determined by the local Party and soviet authority, which is in most cases uncultured, limited, and often stubborn. The teacher, according to established procedure, is obliged as an active citizen to participate in all of the numerous gatherings which bear absolutely no relation to school matters; he is expected to express himself in a spirit favorable to the local authority at these gatherings. Arranging the program of all gatherings is also his responsibility. The active teacher has to be a regular visitor of the reading rooms, the club, the red corner, the office of the village soviet, the office of the kolkhoz direction, etc; the visits to these village institutions are usually not connected with necessity or real interest. The teacher must /74/ be a member of all soviet organizations and societies; he abolishes illiteracy, must help in the preschool education, collect signatures for loans. Without his participation the bulletin-board newspaper does not appear. Teachers are being induced to participate not only in political but also in economic campaigns, such as the collection of taxes in kind--of grain, potatoes, milk, salvage, and scrap metal--often at the expense of their regular work at the school. The teacher is expected to be a "militant atheist", to read lectures on anti-religious themes and at the time of great holidays to organize anti-religious demonstrations, games and parades with the students. During election campaigns the teacher is the duty-bound propagandist and agitator for the candidates sponsored by the Communist Party. The president of the village soviet, the kolkhoz and especially the secretary of the local Party cell may call on the teacher at any time to fulfill

various obligations nowhere defined, order that the work at school 875
be discontinued for the purpose of organizing some gathering, etc. 554
Every disobedience, protest and especially withdrawal from this so-called social work is fraught with unpleasant consequences for the village teacher who has no rights. He will be labelled anti-social, a saboteur; he will be "dealt with" at public gatherings, in newspapers which are posted and even in the rayon paper, all this without any regard for the safeguarding of the teacher's authority among the students at the school in which he works. Under such conditions can the teacher find time to prepare for his duties at school, carefully draw up his plan of work, accurately correct written assignments of the students, have time for self-instruction and outside training? It is not an accident, then, that in the Bobruiskaya oblast', out of 429 teachers who had registered for outside training in the Pedagogical Institute only 284 completed the plan of study. In fact, the teacher is placed in a position, deprived of rights, in which he "did not, does not, and could not be" in any state regime except the Soviet.

With such a deplorable composition of the teaching cadres, 871
with their superficial professional and general educational level, one should not expect a correct and successful organization of the pedagogical process in the Soviet school. If, furthermore, one considers the abnormal and often unbearable conditions under which students have to study and teachers have to perform their pedagogical duties, it becomes clear why the law concerning general education is not observed. The frequent cases of students who leave school before their time, failures en masse, a shocking decline of grades, with a low level of the knowledge of subjects studied in school, are not surprising.

Last year the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party 873
issued the following resolution: 871

"The transition from seven-year education to general secondary education (a ten year program) should be completed at the end of the five-year plan in the capitals of the republics, in the subordinate cities of the republics, in the oblast', krai and large industrial centers. Conditions for the full realization of general secondary education (the ten year program) during the next five-year plan should be prepared in other towns and villages."

The Congress also considered it necessary to introduce

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively
563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the
563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main
647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very
[illegible] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets
665 had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no
657 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

557 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers
665 were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was
not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the
fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often
had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers,
and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant
668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made
use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out
their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state
apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for
their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful
vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the
peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority,
occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable
impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy
President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary
qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal
life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the
vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and
factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal
565 influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia,
living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had
no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without
renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The
Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf. p. 17, cat. 116--Analyst]

665 unaffected and accessible. He took under his direct protection and guidance the young Communists who were just out of the Komsomol and resolutely promoted them to rather responsible positions, taking notice of their successes and helping them in their work. Most Belorussian Party workers considered Sharangovich as one of their own and trusted him.

The Estonian, Gei, was at that time the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. He had been sent /43/ out by the Kremlin around the end of 1929. Before his appointment nothing either good or bad was known of him, and it is possible that he was a lower level functionary somewhere in the R. S. F. S. R. In any case, his appointment to Belorussia was looked upon as a promotion since the region was regarded as a rather responsible field of Party activity. Its position on the border, the complicated state of its national affairs, and the policy which was being followed at the time within Belorussia, demanded that the Party secretary be adaptable, tactful, and careful in his work. Gei was not noted for his masterful organizational ability, and in his work as director of a republican Party he was not outstanding. He did not vaunt himself, nor induce others to do so. By nature he had no friends nor in fact any close relationships. Nothing was altered in the organization of work by Sharangovich's arrival. At that time everything was subordinated to accomplishing one task -- the speediest realization of the collectivization in Belorussia. Hundreds of workers were sent out in brigades throughout the regions and districts to give on the spot assistance. Telegrams with the sternest possible directives were dispatched from the center, setting all kinds of requirements and demanding reports. All efforts were aimed at declaring "total collectivization" in Belorussia -- about which a telegram could then be sent to the Kremlin. The kolkhozes were given various high-sounding titles. Here and there the first secretary of the Party was remembered and a kolkhoz named after him. The name Gei was also given to a rather large peat factory not far from Minsk.

During the Ezhovshchina Gei's name was removed from the kolkhozes and also from the peat factory. By this sign the Belorussians were able to guess that Gei had turned up in the camp of the "enemies of the motherland."

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665 There was a plan afoot, at first discussed very timidly and diffidently in a narrow circle of Belorussian workers, of maneuvering

557 665 to the point where the first secretary of the Party Central Committee would be a Belorussian. The idea began to catch on more and more obstinately after the arrival of Sharangovich in Minsk. It is conceivable that this aim was furthered by the opposition which developed for the succession to Lenin, and possibly the Belorussians chose this moment as the most appropriate. In any case, there was a tendency to support for the post of first secretary either V. Sharangovich or the president of the Sovnarkom /Council of People's Commissariats/ of the B. S. S. R., N. Goloded. Further blows were being dealt to Gei's already rather weak influence upon the course of events as well as his authority among the leaders. Sharangovich cooperated with him only formally, having gathered under his banner a group of Party secretaries from the local districts. Most of the People's Commissars supported the Sovnarkom President, N. Goloded, whose authority was unquestionable. Although not very highly educated, Goloded possessed great natural abilities and was a skillful leader. /44/ His protectors in Moscow were Molotov, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. Another prominent figure in Belorussia was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R., Al. Cherviakov. Gei was almost isolated, and in several cases Goloded simply ignored him. Gei's position was also insecure because he had spent the first years of his work in Belorussia at the time when the national policy was still being promulgated -- when Prishchepov was People's Commissar of Agriculture and had aimed at strengthening the private peasants. It goes without saying that the first signature on all the decisions and decrees of that period concerning cultural reconstruction and the land problem was that of Gei. The Kremlin demanded a more decisive struggle with the Natsdemovshchina and the Prishchepovschina. However, the laurels of "watchfulness" for uncovering "counter-revolution" in the national question belonged to the G. P. U.; it was only after the event that Gei, through the use of academic brigades, was able to provide a foundation for proving the national theories harmful and for justifying the correctness of the 1930 arrests. Gei was recalled from Belorussia in 1931, and some Belorussian leaders saw in this the promise of the speedy realization of their desires to see a Belorussian as first secretary.

After a short while the Kremlin sent the Ingush, N. Gikalo, in place of Gei to Belorussia as first secretary. The hopes of the

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Belorussian leaders had not been justified. By sending Secretary Gikalo, the Kremlin made it very clear to the Belorussian Party leadership that it had no intention of indulging their desires and hopes of altering the established method of appointing the first secretary of the Party in Belorussia. Gikalo's further activities confirmed this in full. Evidently the Kremlin endowed him with wide and extraordinary powers and instructed him to put the Belorussian Party organization in order, forcing it to be subordinate to the one-man leadership of the first secretary. The Belorussians lost very much by this exchange of Gei for Gikalo. The Party summit had clearly miscalculated. Gikalo's subsequent work reduced their role to naught. He employed various methods for subjugating them. According to the etiquette previously in effect, it was considered inappropriate for even the first secretary of the Party to bring along his own collaborators. Gikalo disregarded this convention, and came to Minsk with a private secretary whom he introduced as his aide. Up until then such a position as aide had not even existed in Soviet or Party nomenclature. This one assumed an attitude of complete independence with regard to all Communists, including the leaders, and was very emphatic in insisting that all his orders be fulfilled as though they came from Gikalo himself. Gikalo not only did not oppose this state of affairs but even ordered compliance. /45/ He did not become intimate with anyone, and behaved quite independently. He devoted a lot of attention to the second secretary, Sharangovich. Gikalo knew that he enjoyed a certain amount of popularity and authority among Belorussians, and therefore he endeavored to bring him over to his own side and subordinate him to his influence. He accomplished it rather quickly. He began by issuing instructions that Sharangovich was to be credited with certain services which had previously never even been heard of. By means of propaganda Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement in Belorussia during the Soviet-Polish War. Gikalo arranged to have certain obliging Communists found to organize the collection of signatures on petitions requesting that Sharangovich be decorated for his past services. As a result of this campaign, assisted by intercessions from "up above" in the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party, Sharangovich, twelve years after his "partisan exploits", was decorated by the Soviet government with the Order of the Red Banner, at that time the highest military decoration. Real partisans were secretly offended by this injustice

537 and felt that it was not much use performing services and deeds of
665 valor since what was really needed was sponsorship and protection. By this skillful maneuver Gikalo broke up the consolidation of the Belorussian Communist summit, and Sharangovich fell wholly under his influence.

The Communists who were grouped around Goloded, the President of the Sovnarkom, likewise decided to crown their protector with a decoration. In the first years of Soviet power, Goloded had been president of the executive committee in the country town of Gori-Gorkiy. In those times partisans still operated in the Belorussian forests, and the Soviets were waging a savage war against them. Because of his public capacity Goloded also took some part in repressing the anti-Soviet partisans. Infected with the example of Sharangovich's decoration Goloded's supporters also began to collect signatures on petitions. Only a small rumor was collected because the sphere of his activity had been limited to one uezd, the "deeds" of Goloded had not had many witnesses, and careful people took a look around anyway, to see how Secretary Gikalo would react to this campaign. The question of decorating Goloded was brought up before the Bureau of the Party Central Committee, but there it was shelved and never put in motion. This was a bitter affront to Goloded, and bad feeling developed between him and Gikalo. However he nursed his malice and did not enter into an open conflict with Gikalo, considering that such a struggle would be dangerous to himself. /46/

From the very first days of his work Gikalo had tried to place his men in the most important sectors of the work. He sent to Moscow for one of his good friends, a certain Posse who graduated from the Institute of Red Professorship /Institut krasnoi professury/. Posse occupied several positions in cultural institutions. He was a lecturer in the Communist university, in the journalistic institute, and also worked in the Institute of Party History. Posse was quite a talented writer and frequently placed his articles in Party organs. He was very active in the uprooting of National-Democracy, and Gikalo used him to exert influence on the cultural front. New faces likewise appeared on the Central Committee staff, placed there by Gikalo. At first they always occupied very inconsequential positions, a certain Lentsner was very characteristic in this respect. Previously he had been Trotsky's private secretary, as people who

557 were interested in the matter explained it. Lentsner understood
665 full well that having been an intimate of Trotsky would make it very difficult for him to carry on any widespread activities without considerable tenacity on his own part as well as extensive support and backing. Gikalo also took this into account. In addition, Lentsner's energetic nature strove after power, where Gikalo also supported him since he liked Lentsner's assertiveness and evidently had known him before. In order to provide Lentsner with lower-level Party work for a term where he might demonstrate his practical abilities, Gikalo appointed him secretary of the Sennenskii Rayon Party Committee. This rayon occupies a rather prominent place in Belorussia as it is very large and devoted primarily to flax growing. In fulfilling the plans for sowing, harvesting, and, most important of all, for government deliveries, the work of the rayon Party secretary is appreciated very highly. Lentsner appraised the situation correctly. By applying force and using highly repressive measures against the kolkhozes he managed to see that the kolkhozes of the Sennenskii rayon not only fulfilled the plan for linen deliveries of flax but even over-fulfilled it. The rayon participated in numerous other Soviet economic campaigns. After these "victories" Lentsner, in order to publicize his efforts, wrote a pamphlet with the title Iz otstaiushchikh v peredovye /From Lagards to Leaders/. Ostensibly the pamphlet praised the Party leadership, personified by Gikalo, through whose efforts the Sennenskii rayon took the lead in forced deliveries of flax. By means of percentages and figures the results of the efforts of former years were contrasted with the previous year when Lentsner had become Party Secretary. There were a lot of distortions and false comparisons in the pamphlet. In this way Lentsner presented Gikalo with a chance to emphasize his successful choice of Lentsner as rayon secretary, which had been fully justified by experience, and, what is more important, to propose after several months of local level work that the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party appoint Lentsner editor of the Party newspaper Zvezda /The Star/ /47/. Lentsner was recalled from the rayon and confirmed as editor; thus this important and influential position, one which Gikalo was particularly anxious to have occupied by his own man, was filled by a person who owed allegiance to him and was responsive to his instructions. In his new book Lentsner began to copy the methods of the infallible Moskovskaia Pravda /Moscow Pravda/ in full.

7: Krushinsky - 53 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

557 665 The moment was very appropriate. Stalin had settled accounts with the opposition and become the completely powerful leader. The theory and practice of leadership was picked up and quickly began to spread into the provinces. Even in the innermost rayons, the rural kolkhoz Party members shouted at meetings, "All hail to our leader so-and-so!" Any secretary of the local Party Committee could be considered such a leader. The "leader" accepted all this enthusiasm as his due. The leadership treatment and fawning before Gikalo were of course especially outrageous. Lentsner, as editor of Zvezda /The Star/, lauded Gikalo and spared no words or phrases. His portraits were published in large editions, and clubs, reading rooms, Party and Soviet institutions, schools, and empty shop windows were decorated with them in large quantities. Access to him became a great deal more difficult, and just to see him a special pass was necessary. He did not always receive even responsible Party functionaries. The following incident will attest just how cozy a nest had been feathered by means of 'kadership' and apple polishing. During a banquet, after a session of the Party plenum everyone was shouting, "All hail to our leader, Comrade Gikalo." However there was one member of the banquet who started to quarrel, evidently after considerable intake of alcohol, about the propriety of calling Gikalo a "leader". This incident was immediately brought to the attention of Secretary Sharangovich. The audacious individual was expelled from from the Party, but the affair stretched on for more than a year and finally came to the ears of Moscow. The guilty person was excused by the fact that of course there is only one leader -- Stalin, and although Gikalo is an excellent Party director still he is not a leader. The guilty man was reinstated in the Party, with a reprimand, however, for "quarreling without cause". At the time there were five Party secretaries in various fields of activity, all perpetually guarded by G. P. U. agents.

Purges 1933 and 1934

665 661 In 1933 there was a purge in the Party. Gikalo used it to get rid of certain elements which were troublesome to him and thus to strengthen his own position still further. To attain these ends he selected a commission with particular care. It was important to choose a president /48/ for the purge. In order to settle matters, once and for all with the national movement in Narkompros, the Academy of Sciences, the University, the State Publishing House,

7: Krushinsky--57 G-4, 5 (no date)1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

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661 A new Party purge took place after the killing of Kirov; it went under the innocent designation of a "certification of Party documents." This purge was not public and had as its slogan -- "Let's put Party affairs in order." Externally it looked as though the Party records and documents were being checked and collated. Accuracy was required in all files. However, in actuality, this was the most terrible purge of all. All Communists who had ever been penalized, those excluded from the Party in the past, ones suspected of nationalistic inclinations, Trotskyism, and those who had come from other parties, all those were under suspicion and had their Party cards taken away. Lists were drawn up of the ones selected, and their expulsion from the Party was legalized by a Central Committee decree. This work was handled by the so-called Commissioner of Party Control, who had taken the place of the Central Control Commission. In some institutions as many as fifty percent were ousted; everything was done behind the scenes, and it was rare that anyone appealed. However, in some isolated cases Gikalo called in the expellees for examination. In Minsk Professor Kaminskii, a man of seventy-five and a specialist on eye diseases, was expelled after an examination of his Party record /51/ on the grounds that before joining the Party he had been in the Bund and in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. To Gikalo's question as to why he had changed from one party to another he cleverly remarked that all his life he had been seeking the best party and at last had found it ...

Eventually, of course, some of those expelled were reinstated by Moscow, but this took years. In Pravda there appeared articles about excessive zeal, a too formalistic attitude and too little sensitivity, which stated that some honorable people had been expelled.

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665 After the check-up of Party documents several commissars were recalled from Belorussia, even though they had not been expelled from the Party and had not suffered any Party penalities. The reasons were deep and secret. Those recalled from Belorussia were Belorussian by nationality. In the past they had not been mixed up in active national work, having on the contrary replaced the commissars who were fired and arrested in 1930. However, during their work they had not practiced indiscriminate defamation of everything national in Belorussia and in many cases quietly encouraged various manifestations of the national work. They had been embittered by the dictatorial tactics of Secretary Gikalo, and there were other motives as well. These commissars had joined forces around Sovnarkom president Goloded, Gikalo's strong and stubborn opponent. They never ceased to regard him as a possible candidate for the post of first party

557 665 secretary in Belorussia once Sharangovich, after getting his decoration, went over to Gikalo's side. Goloded was a good business man and not a worker in the national movement. While president of the Sovnarkom, in 1928, he carefully studied the economy of the region, aimed to develop industry in the Republic, and supported Belorussian cultural institutions and theaters. Gikalo discerned in Goloded a powerful and influential competitor. However, by his clever tactics during the Party purges Gikalo managed to cut him off from most of his support. Platun was recalled from Narkompros and sent out to Siberia as the boss of the political section of Sovkhoz. D. Chernushevich, the former director of the Cultural and Propaganda Section of the Central Committee, was appointed in his place. People's Commissar of Agriculture Rechitskii was recalled and sent to the Privolzhskaia oblast' to manage transportation. In his place, Goloded's deputy, the Pole Genek, was appointed. The President of the Higher Council of the National Ecomomy /Vysshii Soviet Narodnogo Khoziaistva/ (as the system of industrial administration was called before the organization of special commissariats) Grisevich was appointed director of the political section of some railroad in Siberia. People's Commissar of Health Tsentsiper, a friend of Goloded, was also recalled. A certain Surta was sent out from Moscow to replace him. /52/ All these had been old Belorussian figures. On the eve of the Ezhovshchina they were temporarily faced with honorable exile.

Party Personnel Shifts 1934-1936

In about 1934 the second secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, Sharangovich, was recalled. His transfer out of Belorussia was evidently the work of first secretary Gikalo. Sharangovich, as has already been indicated, enjoyed some authority among Belorussian workers in the first period of his work. He was considered one of them, and he was also closer to them and more accessible than the Ingush, Gikalo, all the more so since he did not display that particular dislike for the Belorussian movement which Gikalo manifested in his work. (1) Upon Sharangovich's

1. It should be noted even so that in spite of all his "particular dislike for the Belorussian national movement"

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Gikalo shielded Belorussian literature and art, in fact patronized it, similar to one of his followers - Ponomarenko about whom more later.

arrival for work in Belorussia Gikalo, aiming to divide the unity of the Belorussian Communist leaders, tried to attract him to his side, and in this he succeeded almost completely. But in the course of time Sharangovich became superfluous, for Gikalo and for Belorussia. His recall coincided with the reorganization of the Central Party Commission and the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, the so-called Ts. K. K. -R. K. I., which were separated into two independent institutions. Sharangovich was appointed commissioner of party control in Kazakhstan. As secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party his scope of activity had been broader and more varied since every day he had to mix with a number of leading workers and was approached for directives on all problems of Party and Soviet construction. The commissioner of party control worked in a limited field, his job consisting mainly of analyzing all possible infractions of Party ethics and expulsions from the Party, examination of appeals from expulsion, and the imposition of Party penalties. Generally old Party members were appointed to this post, ones who were no longer capable of broad practical activity in other phases of work. On one hand Sharangovich's amour propre was flattered at being appointed as an organ of Party control, at being entrusted by the Kremlin with control functions over the Party in Kazakhstan, but simultaneously he was removed from the political scene, and this did not suit his restless nature.

On Sharangovich's recommendation, the Belorussian, Volkovich, was appointed second secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. Until his appointment Volkovich had been the president of the Bobruysk executive committee and was not widely known. At his new and prominent post he made no impression at all, being sick frequently while Sharangovich was secretary. Belorussian workers had generally come to him to have questions decided, but after his departure not many came to Volkovich, knowing his weak orientation in questions of Soviet and Party construction. All efforts were made to gain admittance to Gikalo himself as he was now the only real Party functionary left in Belorussia. To tell the truth there were still three secretaries left in the Party Central Committee, but they played no conspicuous role since they were occupied with specialized phases of

557 activity. Such a one, for example, was the Special Secretary for
665 Transport, Ivanov. He did not concern himself with general Party direction. Thus Gikalo's only opposition was the president of the Sovnarkom, Goloded. Their mutual relations were deteriorating rapidly.

The tense situation in the country at that time became abruptly worse. In Moscow, efforts to annihilate and liquidate the members of the opposition were being intensified. There was a significant shake up of Party leaders in command of military districts throughout the Soviet Union. Heightened "awareness" was being demanded of everyone. Any sort of exposure was encouraged. . . The following incident was typical of Belorussian conditions. Trotsky's former secretary -- a certain Lentsner -- mentioned on page 46, was editor of the Party newspaper, Zvezda. He was a very adroit fellow, and Secretary Gikalo was particularly sympathetic toward him. When the unmasking campaign had reached a rather intense pitch, Gikalo made haste to spirit his favorite out of Belorussia into the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast', doing this without any publicity or the usual Party formalities. Having made arrangements with the secretary of Dnepropetrovsk oblast', a man named Kataevich who was widely known throughout the Soviet Union, Gikalo dispatched Lentsner to him without a decree from the Bureau of the Party Central Committee. There he was given the post of director of the Oblast' Agricultural department. Goloded, being a member of the Party Central Committee, took advantage of this. At a session of the Bureau he demanded to have explained upon what foundation a worker of top Party standing, the editor of the Party newspaper, and appointed to this post by a plenum of the Party Central Committee, /54/ was sent out of Belorussia without the Bureau's sanction. Gikalo was placed in an extremely sensitive position, the more so since Lentsner had such a heavy black mark against him, as friendship with Trotsky was considered to be. In the minutes of the Central Committee Bureau's session Goloded entered his own particular opinion concerning Secretary Gikalo's incorrect activities as manifested in his granting leave to Lentsner and the event became known in the Kremlin since all minutes were sent to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party in Moscow.

It seems that Secretary Gikalo was recalled from Belorussia in the first part of 1936. He received a post in the Kharkov Oblast' as second secretary of the Party. It was evident to all that he had

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665 been demoted . . . Sovnarkom President Goloded had become temporarily unassailable, and in Moscow he was above any sort of suspicion. As for Gikalo, to be changed from party director of a republic to second secretary of an oblast', even one with heavy industry, was considered a step down.

After an absence of more than a year in Kazakhstan, V. Sharangovich was sent by the Kremlin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. It looked as if the Belorussian Communists had attained their heart's desire -- as first secretary they got a Belorussian who for the third time was returning to work in Belorussia. The ensuing year brought with it many griveous changes.

Yezhovshchina - 1937

643 /this spelling occurs in the original, otherwise the transliteration used is "Ezhovshchina." Translator/

661 In the middle of 1937, the president of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., Aleksandr Grigor'evich Cherviakov, committed suicide. A Belorussian by nationality and born in the village of Dukorka thirty-five kilometers from Minsk, he was a teacher by specialty, having graduated from the normal school in Wilno. In the First World War Cherviakov was an officer. The February Revolution found him in Petrograd where he subsequently organized the Belorussian soldiers of the Petrograd garrison. After the Bolshevik seizure of power Cherviakov entered the Communist Party. When on February 27, 1919, the so-called Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was organized on the territory of Lithuania and Belorussia, Cherviakov became Deputy Commissar of Public Education (1). From the day of /55/ the second announcement of the Belorussian S. S. R. up to his death Cherviakov was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee and then of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. . He was not noted for his revolutionary activities. It is possible that in the

1. Immediately before this Cherviakov was Commissar of Public Education in the first government of the B. S. S. R (cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsikopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1934 Edition, Vol. LXI, page 195/ (sic).

000 decided to give Wilno to Lithuania, knowing that in this way it would become Soviet.

However, before deserting Wilno even temporarily, the military high command of the Red Army picked a special purchasing commission which bought up manufactured articles with captured Polish money. They also bought hides and leather goods, various types of machinery, etc. All the purchases were taken out of Wilno and exported into the center of the Soviet Union. The bigger merchants concealed most of their wares, but their stores were discovered with the aid of their servants (shop assistants). After the termination of the officially-appointed period for the transfer of Wilno to Lithuania the city remained in the hands of the N.K.V.D. for two more days. The latter liquidated all the "unneeded" elements in the city and the prisons.

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The Communist guidance of the life of the Belorussian people during P. Ponomarenko's term in office, can be characterized as a period of comparative quiet. No one particularly admired his methods or his personality, but there were no disturbing occurrences similar to those which marked the secretaryships of Gikalo and Volkov. The unification of western Belorussia distracted people's attention to a great extent from the various unnecessary experiments and tensions on the old territory of Soviet Belorussia. Everyone who had the chance, particularly the working intelligentsia, writers, poets, theatrical employees, singers, and musicians, used all their pull to get assigned to the newly-attached territory. Most of them wanted to get acquainted with the new capitalist world and see there the horrible suffering and generally pitiable existence of the peasantry and workers. Instead of it they saw, if not an absolutely high standard of living, at least /71/ the possibility of acquiring both food products and other articles for everyday use. These circumstances dispersed the legend of the oppressiveness of capitalism. In accordance with his means everyone tried to get clothes and shoes for himself, and in particular to buy something for his wife and children. Every conceivable employee in Moscow, from the All-Union Commissariats and various trusts right up to deputy commissars tried to get into Western Belorussia. The directors of Belorussian agricultural trusts acquired light cars with small cylinder displacement and often brought them back even to the All-Union-Commissars, for a price, of course, but a comparatively low one. This type of light car appeared not

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177
way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557
they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 563
national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661
marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence,
but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible
and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some
Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of
the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government
representatives and city people in general. This was the result of
the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661
period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]-
the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores;
there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost
valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past,
even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to
light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which
had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N. K. V.
D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was
shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and
senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched
on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly
the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very
scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were,
although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625
of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words
more need to be said concerning the activity of the N. K. V. D. in 661
this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People
were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies
of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to
foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and
employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with
a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was
the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given
particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already
served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 -- Analyst]

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

641 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[257] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

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641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organizations,

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

666 [64] Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR who has reached the age of 21, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualification, social origin, property status or past activities, has the right to be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

[502] Art. 112. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 113. Citizens serving in the armed forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 114. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

Art. 115. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 116. Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

Art. 117. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time upon a decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 118. Elections of deputies to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR are held by election districts on the following basis:

in elections to regional Soviets - one deputy for every 10,000 to 15,000 of the population, depending upon its size;

in elections to district Soviets - one deputy for every 1,000 of the population; in a district whose population does not exceed 25,000, twenty-five deputies are elected, and in a district whose population exceeds 60,000, not more than sixty deputies are elected;

in elections to city Soviets or city district Soviets - one deputy for every 350 to 1,000 of the population, depending upon its size; in a city or city district whose population does not exceed 12,000, thirty-five deputies are elected;

in elections to village or settlement Soviets - one deputy for every 100 of the population; in a village or settlement whose population does not exceed 1,000, nine deputies are elected, and where the population exceeds 2,500, not more than twenty-five deputies.

The basis of representation for each regional, district, city, village and settlement Soviet of Working People's Deputies is fixed in the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Regional, District, City, Village and Settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR, within the range of the bases of representation indicated in the present article.

668 the Belorussian language one-year courses were made available in
871 the secondary schools. These courses remained available, as a provisional measure, for all, up to regular graduates of the pedagogical department of the Belorussian University. Taken all together these measures made it possible as early as the beginning of the academic year of 1924, to change the curriculum to the native language in schools, kindergartens, adult evening schools, and stations for the liquidation of illiteracy.

563 Parallel with the Belorussianization of the schools Narkompros[1]
871 took practical steps to guarantee their own languages to the schools of the national minorities. The work among the Jewish population was particularly successful. The special Jewish inspectors of Narkompros, and in the neighboring towns as well, worked intensively to open schools, kindergartens, orphan homes and libraries for the Jewish population. This great task was not always accomplished smoothly, and thus aroused some dissatisfaction against the zealous promulgators of the national policy. Under the new system parents did not have a free choice of schools for their children; besides, in the cities and especially among the Jewish intelligentsia, only Russian was spoken in the family, and the children experienced great difficulty in learning Hebrew when they got to the Jewish national schools. Then, in addition, after completing a Jewish secondary school they had a very limited choice of higher schools for further education. A thorough knowledge of Russian was necessary to pass the entrance examinations into an institution of higher learning outside Belorussia, and in the Belorussian university itself there was only one Jewish subdivision (section) in the educational department where the lectures were given in Hebrew. Therefore some parents went to work in the R. S. F. S. R. or sent their children to school there, and thus the Jewish secondary schools, especially the upper classes, were not full, having three to five pupils in a class. Nevertheless the work accomplished was great and fully responded to the national feelings of the masses among whom Zionistic tendencies still existed. Among the special normal schools in Belorussia were the pedagogical academy in Gomel' which had instruction in Hebrew, and the agricultural technical school in Kurasovshchina, not far from Minsk. Jewish children were fully assured of having seven-year schooling and even secondary schooling in some cities. Homeless orphans were collected in Jewish orphan asylums, and there were a sufficient number of kindergartens. /6/

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

563 Less significant was the network of educational institutions where
871 the teaching was done in Polish, although in Narkompros there were
special inspectors for Polish schools. The reasons for this situation
will be told below.

873 Narkompros[1] directed particular attention to the organization and development of the Belorussian State University. Through a common effort this young cultural center established a serious course of study and acquired a well-deserved prestige. In a comparatively short time a solid group of well-known professors had been chosen, among them the following Belorussian scholars: the popular and generally respected philologist Ia. Lesik, the mathematician Krutalevich, Piotukhovich, who was a literary specialist, Shchekotikhin, who was a professor of art, as well as others. It should be noted that the first graduates of the University, in 1931 and 1932, were better than the later ones. The reason is that despite the rather difficult conditions of student life they were not distracted into other pursuits. They were required to learn, not to participate in various bombastic political campaigns and social undertakings, which were the affair of the Communist Party. Afterwards, unfortunately, the examinations of student activists were judged according to their participation in
66/ political campaigns. A prominent role in the administrative organization of the University was played by the rector, Professor Picheta, a man who had been very successfully selected for this high post. Although not a Belorussian himself, he worked actively and conscientiously to promulgate all measures necessary for strengthening the University. He was arrested in 1930 and, like many others who were arrested that same year, subjected to "investigation" because of a "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" (the S. V. B. - in Belorussian "Sayuz Vyzvalen'nya Belorusi"), which was created at the time by the G. P. U. of the B. S. S. R. More will be said about this below. In the activity of the S. B. V. according to the "plan" (or as popularly put the "tale") of the G. P. U., Professor Picheta was to play the part of a "connecting link" between the S. B. V. and the "Union for the Liberation of Russia", also created for the occasion by the G. P. U. in Russia, which was to be headed by the well-known academician Platonov, a historian like Picheta. After the failure of the "activities" of the S. B. V., Professor Picheta, like the others, was sent into exile and served it in the city of Vyatka where he distributed tickets in the city dining rooms. Due to the stubborn petitions

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

668 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563
191 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach, who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

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[692] Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population. In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

7: Krushinsky--16 G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[62] 563 [798] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish language and were Belorussian by nationality. 563 661 In the heyday of the nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 563 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively
● 563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the
commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists
on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as
their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the
military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian.
But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed
after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers
school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested
together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization
of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division,
quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced
Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of
the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the
563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main
647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers
independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the
local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing
the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would
be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign
did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing
campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy
title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of
responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village
soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP
had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very
[424] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and
those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a
peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary
Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets
665 had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no
557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists
were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were
even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders.
It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and
factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

557 665 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers, and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant 668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority, occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 526 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia, living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf, p. 19, cat. 116--Analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It
was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in
Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka',
a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also
taken off the stage.

They* even turned their attentions to the traveling theater
661 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
545 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could
626 thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the
theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations.
The traveling company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles. The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes: white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs. Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket, only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523 A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict
supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

*[official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 — Analyst]

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
636 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
621 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186
661 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great ancestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

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1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

661 been appointed Deputy President of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R.

563 I consider it necessary to remark on the absurdity of some statements to the effect that the N. K V. D. discriminated in
6 favor of the Jews in making its arrests. Such statements are untrue and tainted with anti-Semitism. If the interested party were concerned with establishing the truth, he could find out from documents that all People's Commissars of the B. S. S. R., regardless of how proletarian their extraction, were arrested. The Commissar of the Communal Economy of the B. S. S. R., Waserman, can serve as an example. During the Ezhovshchina he was arrested together with some others, and in prison went out of his mind. His wife was also arrested. The only one to escape arrest was the Deputy Commissar of the Food Industry, Evsei Paksin, and this was just an accident. The high ranking Jewish Party leaders did not escape either.

625 What went on in the rayons[4] was unspeakably horrible. The
661 most primitive accomodations for thousands of people were hastily
[697] knocked together. In the city of Rogachevo prisoners were confined in the wintertime in a ruined old castle without stoves, doors or windows. The ruins were surrounded with barbed wire and by a guard. People died; an epidemic of typhus broke out, and the N. K. V. D. had to stop using the prison.

The inhabitants of the rayons adjacent to Poland were in excessively difficult straits as the N. K. V. D. border guard held sway there. Whole villages were emptied of their population. Everyone about whose reliability there was the slightest suspicion or who might have been suspected of being dissatisfied with the Soviet regime, was arrested. It can be stated without exaggeration that a good half of the male population suffered from the persecution. A 'troika's' had jurisdiction over the arrested, and the sentence was final and not subject to appeal. At night the condemed were carted away in trucks to be shot somewhere in the woods. /64/

As to the number of victims of the 1936-1937 terror we can judge by the following indices, Before the war Minsk had a population of about 250, 000, and at the height of the Ezhovshchina from four to five hundred were arrested in a night. At twelve o'clock when the "normal work" of the N. K. V. D. usually began, fear seized the city's population. People could not sleep but waited nervously for the knock and the rustling. There was panic

[4] [During the political purges 1936-1937 - Analyst]

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177 way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557 they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 563 national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661 marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence, but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government representatives and city people in general. This was the result of the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661 period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]-- the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores; there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past, even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N.K.V.D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were, although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625 of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words more need to be said concerning the activity of the N.K.V.D. in 661 this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 --Analyst]

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

692 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

Art. 91. District and city procurators are appointed by the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

Art. 92. The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

461 641 Art. 93. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organization of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 94. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of an eight-hour working day for factory and office workers, the reduction of the working day to seven or six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where working conditions are particularly arduous, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest-homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

641 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[571] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognized for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

575
641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organizational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organizations,

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the Byelorussian people to acquire both the inexhaustible cultural 665 treasures of the Russian people and the great cultural values created by 186 the Socialist Revolution'.

At the same time* Stalin's opponents among the Byelorussian com- 513 ● munists were accused of having been too liberal to the Polish minority in Byelorussia, a strange accusation from a party which professes to adhere to an internationalist ideology. The 'polonizing activities' of the Byelorussian 'Trotskyites, Bukharinites and national-fascists' consisted in having allowed a number of localities in Byelorussia to conduct their business in the Polish language and in having sanctioned the existence of a number of Polish schools.[23]

The purge of the Byelorussian communists terminated the policy of tolerance which the Byelorussian Government had shown towards its national minorities. This tolerance had been symbolically expressed in [186] the coat of arms of the Byelorussian S.S.R., which contained the inscription 'Workers of the World Unite' in four languages: Byelorussian, Great Russian, Yiddish and Polish. The coat of arms in use since 1937 shows the same inscription in Byelorussian and Great Russian only. Together with the Polish inscription in Byelorussia's coat of arms the 'Polish National District' of the Byelorussian S.S.R. likewise disappeared. This district had served purposes similar to those of the 'Polish National District' of the Ukraine. It was called after Feliks Dzerzhinsky.

KOLAS AND KUPALA – BYELORUSSIAN LEADERS

The history of the fight between the Kremlin and Byelorussian nation- 186 alism includes the interesting case of the two prominent poets and 538 writers, Yanko Kupala (1882-1942) and Yakub Kolas, whom the Soviet régime drew over to the side of the 'proletarian revolution'. Both belonged to the petty bourgeois Byelorussian nationalist movement grouped around the weekly *Nasha Niva* (Our Cornfield) which long before the October Revolution was the first publication to advocate autonomy for the Byelorussian people.

Kupala was the son of an impoverished nobleman unable to pay for a higher education for his son. Kolas was of peasant origin. Kupala and Kolas had in common their violent hatred of the Polish landowners who owned over 6,000,000 acres of Byelorussian soil in 1914. As a symbolic challenge to the Poles they both threw off their Polish-sounding family names of Lutsevich and Mitskevich respectively and became known under their literary pseudonyms.

Kupala and Kolas found it difficult to overcome their 'bourgeois prejudices'. In their innermost feelings they remained nationalists however hard they tried to be 'good Soviet citizens'. In one of his poems

*[Cf. category 186, pp. 155-157--Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

BeloRussia RC1

russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the 131
Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 728
48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelorussian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia [133]
was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agricultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications. Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the [133]
annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per cent of the total territory.[34]

There are but few small towns in Western Byelorussia; only two 361
localities have about 50,000 inhabitants each, Grodno and Brest Litovsk. Originally 'Western Byelorussia' as it had emerged from the Molotov-Ribbentrop deal for the partition of Poland, had one town of 100,000 inhabitants, Bialystok, a centre of the Polish textile industry and the only place in the whole of 'Western Byelorussia' possessing a fairly large industrial class. For this reason, Bialystok was chosen as a kind of emergency capital of Western Byelorussia during the weeks between its occupation by the Red Army and its full incorporation into the B.S.S.R. The 'Peoples Assembly' of Western Byelorussia which on October 28th, 1939, formulated its 'request for admission into the U.S.S.R.' also met in Bialystok.

The new 'centre of Western Byelorussia' had the drawback that it had 563
no Byelorussian population; it had only Polish and Jewish inhabitants and the outskirts of the town were Polish. In view of the national compo- [128]
sition of Bialystok and its surroundings the Soviet Government was unable to maintain its claim to the Bialystok area after the end of the war, particularly since it was located to the east of the Curzon line which Russia adopted in principle as the Polish-Russian frontier. The area of Bialystok covering roughly 5,800 square miles was thus re-allocated to Poland. This transfer was advantageous for the Soviet Union since the B.S.S.R. rid itself thereby of a Polish population of 1,000,000 and thus considerably reduced the seriousness of the minority problem within its boundaries.

After the annexation of Western Byelorussia the minority issue threatened to cause considerable worry to the Minsk Government, since half of the annexed population were either Poles or Jews. In the post-war B.S.S.R. this problem no longer arose not only because of the substantial frontier rectification in Poland's favour in the Bialystok area,

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union Belorussia RC1

563 but also, as in the case of the Ukraine, because of the transfer of Poles and Hitler's extermination of the Jews.

Another important task resulting from the annexation of Western Byelorussia still remains to be carried out by the Government of the B.S.S.R. A large proportion of the Western Byelorussians have little or no Byelorussian national consciousness, and they speak some sort of [197] local Slav dialect which they themselves do not identify as Byelorussian. This applies in particular to the population of Polesia where Polish statistics counted over 700,000 such 'local Slavs'. 'Greater Byelorussia' is now about to round off the formation of a Byelorussian nation by amalgamating the various brands of Byelorussians, not only formally in a purely administrative sense, but also politically and spiritually.

177.56 563 [295] This process, intended to effect the transformation of the Western Byelorussians into a full 'sovietized' people, has encountered considerable opposition, particularly among the Roman Catholics who had formed 20 per cent of the entire Byelorussian minority of the former North-Eastern Poland. The Roman Catholic Byelorussians had always most violently opposed the thesis of the 'brotherhood' between Byelorussians and Great Russians and their political organization under the Polish régime, the Christian Democratic Union, significantly called itself 'Byeloruthenian' instead of 'Byelorussian'.

186 Byelorussian opposition to the Soviet régime is dictated not only by economic and religious motives but also by national considerations. Although it has united Western and Eastern Byelorussia, the Soviet Government has offended Byelorussian nationalism by leaving the city of Vilna outside the Byelorussian 'State'. The Western Byelorussians looked upon Vilna as their national cultural centre and there may have been indeed a good case for including it in Byelorussia, but it was politically more expedient to make it the capital of Soviet Lithuania.

The difficulties which the Soviet régime had to face in post-war Byelorussia were not confined to the new western territories. The whole of Byelorussia had been occupied by the Germans for two to three years, and it was only natural that Soviet propaganda had to start in many respects right from the beginning when the Red Army re-entered Byelorussian territory. A statement by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party heralding the new propaganda campaign admitted indirectly that German Nazi propaganda had been successful among Byelorussians. The Communist Party organizations of Byelorussia were instructed in this statement to overcome 'the anti-collectivist and anti-state tendencies' with which the German occupants had indoctrinated the Byelorussian people.[35]

Many expressions of Byelorussian nationalism, however, existed quite independently of the moral consequences of German occupation. Judging by official Soviet admissions, Byelorussian nationalism, particularly

7: Krushinsky - 70 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

•564 661 The family of a prisoner[4] was in a difficult and terrifying position. Often they had no means of subsistance, and in matters of earning a living they were considered enemies of the people. Members of such a family were not accepted for work, and those who already had jobs were dismissed on some pretext if not simply driven out into the street. The children of a prisoner suffered real tragedy as their situation was quite hopeless. They were refused admittance into middle and upper schools, and in the general schools they were expelled from all student organizations. The family of an "enemy of the people" was beyond the pale of the already limited Soviet legality. Neighbors and acquaintances kept away in such cases and refused to organize the members of the family. Everyone knew full well that there was no helping another's grief, and it was possible to draw suspicion upon oneself by having dealings with an enemy of the people. Such hard-hearted behavior should not be attributed to indignation and enmity toward the fate of relatives of an arrested man, but rather to an attempt to remain apart from it all or to escape the fate of the unlucky ones.

661 All the Belorussian commissars, their deputies, and many of the directors of trusts and other institutions were arrested. Others were appointed in their places and they themselves were frequently arrested in a very short time.

As an example the changes in the People's Commissariat of Public Education can be cited. After Platun's recall from the commissariat, D. Chernushevich was appointed in his place. Before being arrested he was dismissed from his job on charges of National-Democracy. He remained at liberty for two months and made efforts to get out of Belorussia to Rostov on the Don. This attempt failed. He was arrested after another month, and after a short while his wife suffered the same fate.

For a few months the Central-Committee functionary, D'iakov, an uncultured and half-educated person, was Commissar of Public Education. He was also arrested and Voronchenko appointed in his place. An engineer by specialty, young, energetic, and a Communist since Komsomol days he did not last long either but was quickly arrested. /63/ Uralova was the first one to stay at the job, being Narkompros during the war and still in that position not long ago. According to newspaper reports Uralova has now

[4] [i.e one arrested for political deviation - Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1

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SU. 635 Be. 442 131 161

had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101]

The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

● Be. 565 464

The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be 162 369

Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [661]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [100]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [92]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

575 641 sport and defense organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[687] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

645 by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and is subordinate both to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and the corresponding Union-Republican Ministry of the USSR.

Art. 50. Each Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it and is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 51. The Government of the Belorussian SSR or a Minister of the Belorussian SSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR within a period not exceeding three days.

Chapter V. The Local Organs of State Power

631 Art. 52. The organs of state power in regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 53. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are elected by the working people of the respective regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages for a term of two years.

Art. 54. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages direct cultural, political and economic affairs on their territory, draw up the local budgets, direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, assist in strengthening the defensive capacity of the country and ensure the observance of the laws and the protection of the rights of citizens.

Art. 55. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 56. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village is the Executive Committee elected by it, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary and members.

[623] Art. 57. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies in a small locality is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by the Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 58. The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village exercises guidance in cultural, political and economic affairs within its territory on the basis of decisions taken by the corresponding Soviet of Working People's Deputies and superior state organs.

Art. 59. Sessions of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than three times a year.

Sessions of district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than four times a year.

Art. 60. Sessions of Soviets of Working People's Deputies of cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are convened by their respective executive organs not less than once a month.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

631 Art. 61. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities or districts in big cities each elect a Chairman and a Secretary for the duration of their sessions to conduct the sittings of the sessions.

[623] Art. 62. The Chairman of a settlement or village Soviet convenes the Soviet and conducts its sittings.

Art. 63. The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organs of the respective superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 64. The superior Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Executive Committees and to suspend decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 65. The superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies and of their Executive Committees.

634 Art. 66. The regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments and Administrations of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Agriculture
a Department of Finance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Local Industry
a Department of Municipal Economy
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Motor Transport
a Department of Local Fuel Industry
a Department of Roads
a General Department
a Department of Arts
a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the Region, the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the Union-Republican Ministries of Light Industry, Food Industry, Timber Industry and State Farms:

a Department of Light Industry
a Department of Food Industry
a Department of Timber Industry
a Department of State Farms.

[625] Art. 67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Union set up their own administrations under the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies, in accordance with the conditions of the region and on the basis of the laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

661 pitilessly everything that had been created as a labor of love during the NEP. New people were needed, and Prishchepov was classed as an enemy of the people, a wrecker, middleman, protector of the kulaks, and a promulgator of the private homesteads and small villages which were so harmful to the socialist forms of agriculture. In official documents and propaganda his work was contemptuously called the "prishchepovshchina." However, the besmirched activities of Prishchepov the People's Commissar of Agriculture, left a happy and lasting memory among the Belorussian peasantry.

The death of the academician, Professor Ignatovskii, and the arrest of D. Prishchepov were not isolated instances. Almost simultaneously a large group of culturally and economically prominent figures were arrested, among them the very popular philologist and academician Ia. Lesik, the renowned Belorussian geographer and economist, Academician Smolich, the Secretary of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, Academician V. Lastovskii, Picheta, who was rector of the University, and others.

665 625 There were changes in the attitude and approach of the G. P. U. This organization received a standing order which was not to be changed for the arrest of Party members. As late as 1930, the G. P. U. had quite openly not meddled in the internal affairs of the Communist Party as the Party itself held court over its unsubmissive members and administered punishment. It had its own controlling and punitive organs in the Central Control Commission which had its plenipotentiaries throughout the republics and oblasts.... /22/

Anton Balitskii and the "Odessa" Group (1)

661 The People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, was also a victim of the G. P. U. Until 1928 he was a deputy in the Narkomat, but even then he actually directed all its activities. Professor V. Ignatovskii had many other responsibilities besides the Narkomat of Public Education. He devoted a lot of attention to the Institute of Belorussian Culture and gave lectures at the University and in the Agricultural Institute; literary and scientific work also took up a lot of his time. He had written several studies of

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1. For information on the "Odessites" see the article by A. Sakovich, "Belorussi v Odesse" /"Belorussians in Odessa" Beda, /Misery/ No. 5 (10), May, 1952.

661 been appointed Deputy President of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R.

563 I consider it necessary to remark on the absurdity of some statements to the effect that the N. K. V. D. discriminated in favor of the Jews in making its arrests. Such statements are untrue and tainted with anti-Semitism. If the interested party were concerned with establishing the truth, he could find out from documents that all People's Commissars of the B. S. S. R., regardless of how proletarian their extraction, were arrested. The Commissar of the Communal Economy of the B. S. S. R., Wasserman, can serve as an example. During the Ezhovshchina he was arrested together with some others, and in prison went out of his mind. His wife was also arrested. The only one to escape arrest was the Deputy Commissar of the Food Industry, Evsei Paksin, and this was just an accident. The high ranking Jewish Party leaders did not escape either.

• 625 661 [692] What went on in the rayons[a] was unspeakably horrible. The most primitive accomodations for thousands of people were hastily knocked together. In the city of Rogachevo prisoners were confined in the wintertime in a ruined old castle without stoves, doors or windows. The ruins were surrounded with barbed wire and by a guard. People died; an epidemic of typhus broke out, and the N. K. V. D. had to stop using the prison.

The inhabitants of the rayons adjacent to Poland were in excessively difficult straits as the N. K. V. D. border guard held sway there. Whole villages were emptied of their population. Everyone about whose reliability there was the slightest suspicion or who might have been suspected of being dissatisfied with the Soviet regime, was arrested. It can be stated without exaggeration that a good half of the male population suffered from the persecution. A 'troika's' had jurisdiction over the arrested, and the sentence was final and not subject to appeal. At night the condemed were carted away in trucks to be shot somewhere in the woods. /64/

As to the number of victims of the 1936-1937 terror we can judge by the following indices. Before the war Minsk had a population of about 250,000, and at the height of the Ezhovshchina from four to five hundred were arrested in a night. At twelve o'clock when the "normal work" of the N. K. V. D. usually began, fear seized the city's population. People could not sleep but waited nervously for the knock and the rustling. There was panic

[a During the political purges 1936-1939 - [illegible]]

625 661 in the apartments at the sound of an automobile in the street. Every family expected the dreaded visitors. Often in one family several persons were arrested. Fellow-workers in the various institutions, coming to work in the morning, looked around uneasily to determine the number of victims of the previous night. A person had to make superhuman efforts to maintain his outward calm and self-control at his work. He had to appear indifferent to the arrests of his close friends or people sharing his views. It was dangerous to show any interest in the prisoners or to ask about the fate of their families. The nerves of some who were still at liberty could not stand the strain. They did not lie down and go to sleep but got dressed and wandered aimlessly through the deserted streets of the city until morning. There was nothing to justify this behavior, but in the street one somehow felt more composed, and it was better than to wait for death in your own apartment. A person comforted himself with the fact that he would usually learn somewhat earlier if any fatal blow was being prepared for him. Many tried to be sent to distant, and if possible isolated, places. Anyone who could, tried to go to another oblast', another kray, far from any settled regions. There were cases of voluntary requests to be transferred to work in the Arctic Circle, Yakutiya, or the polar regions, of persons who signed contracts to work there -- in the hope of being saved from arrest. However these measures seldom were of any avail. Foresighted people would prepare a small parcel with laundry and some necessary articles in case they were to be arrested. The terror was heightened by rumors of the nightmarish conditions under which the prisoners were kept, tortures during the examinations, forced confessions. The prison cells were filled to overflowing; prisoners slept in shifts, all lying on one side so as to take up less room that way, and after a certain time; at a command, all turning over to lie on the other side.

697 661 Before being deposited in the cell, prisoners[1] were subjected to the most minute search; all watches, glasses, aids, bandages which sick people might have, and shoe laces were taken away; buttons were cut off trousers, jackets, overcoats, and buckles were taken off shoes. Particular care was taken to make sure that the prisoners did not keep anything metallic. Being deprived of glasses and bandages was, for those who were sick, a cause not only of discomfort /65/ but of pain. The former provincial and district prisons were altered during the Ezhovshchina.

[1] [Political prisoners of the 1936-1937 purge - Analyst]

661 his throat with a razor but was saved from dying. Possibly it was just this which saved him from arrest. Others who were not arrested were Z. Biadulia and the budding writers, Brovko and Glebko. /67/

After the Ezhovshchina

625 661 After the Ezhovshchina accounts were settled with those whose function it had been to execute the will of the organizers of the terror. However, this took place within the walls of the N. D. V. D. In Vitebsk a certain Grechkin who had been arrested and subsequently set free was summoned to the (N. K. V. D.) court to serve as a witness in a case involving the inadmissibility of torture during examination. The investigator had knocked out several of Grechkin's teeth and was found guilty, but Grechkin was compelled to sign a statement that he would not divulge any information about what had transpired. The document, I Accuse the Kremlin of the Genocide of My Nation, by Nikolai Abramchik, published in 1950 in Toronto, Canada, in English, will provide sufficient testimony to the deeds of the N. K. V. D. in Belorussia during the Ezhovshchina.

665 661 The secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, Volkov, was recalled from Belorussia after the Ezhovshchina and sent off to work in Mordovskaia oblast'. What became of him subsequently is not known, but the Belorussians will not forget this black figure who himself played such a very vital part in the slaughter of tens of thousands of people. His cruelty was exceptional. P. Ponomarenko, who formerly had been a political agent in the Red Army in the Far East, was appointed first secretary. A new direction could be sensed in the Party's work, and this was particularly noticeable where the national movement was concerned. Formerly, national characteristics had been taken into account in various elections, appointments, and recruitments, but after the arrival of Ponomarenko the national problem ceased to exist officially.
661 The whole group of the former leaders had been destroyed.[1]
643 Natalevich -- a man little known to the Belorussian masses, lacking in authority and initiative, and obedient to the will of the secretary of the Central Committee -- settled down into the presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. To the post of Secretary of the Supreme Soviet -- who in fact was the deputy president -- a completely unknown worker from around Mogilev
661 was appointed. A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally

[1] [During the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177 way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557 they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 563 national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661 marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence, but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government representatives and city people in general. This was the result of the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661 period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]-the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores; there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past, even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N. K. V. D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were, although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625 of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words 661 more need to be said concerning the activity of the N. K. V. D. in this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 -- Analyst]

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

631 Art. 61. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities or districts in big cities each elect a Chairman and a Secretary for the duration of their sessions to conduct the sittings of the sessions.

[623] Art. 62. The Chairman of a settlement or village Soviet convenes the Soviet and conducts its sittings.

Art. 63. The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organs of the respective superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 64. The superior Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Executive Committees and to suspend decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 65. The superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies and of their Executive Committees.

634 Art. 66. The regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments and Administrations of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Agriculture
a Department of Finance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Local Industry
a Department of Municipal Economy
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Motor Transport
a Department of Local Fuel Industry
a Department of Roads
a General Department
a Department of Arts
a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the Region, the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the Union-Republican Ministries of Light Industry, Food Industry, Timber Industry and State Farms:

a Department of Light Industry
a Department of Food Industry
a Department of Timber Industry
a Department of State Farms.

[625] Art. 67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Union set up their own administrations under the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies, in accordance with the conditions of the region and on the basis of the laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

661 published by the Leningrad Publishing House in 1948. On the orders of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gei, "brigades" were formed in the Academy of Sciences, and they meticulously searched through publications, mimeographed speeches, and addresses for elements of National-Democracy. The prose and poetry, as well as newspaper articles, of writers and poets suspected of "Natsdemovshchina" were subjected to careful scrutiny and inspection. Besides those who were arrested, other, so-called "unexposed" National-Democrats, were smoked out. The attacks were transformed into persecution, and as a result of this badgering the famous Belorussian poet, Ianka Kupala, became desperate and attempted to kill himself after the manner of the Japanese samurais. School texts were leafed through carefully, and most of them withdrawn from circulation -- especially reading chrestomathies, grammars, and collections of dictations. Some were withdrawn automatically upon the arrest of the author and independent of their content, while others were banned as being considered inappropriate to the era of collectivization in agriculture and the Five-Year Plans. In the reading
626 chrestomathies examples of private farmers either in small villages
872 or isolated homesteads were not permitted. /31/ Nor were the arithmetical problems ever taken from the life of an independent farmer. The teachers themselves had to make up problems using the kolkhoz life or cooperative trade as a base. Moreover, only high quality produce or well-fattened stock could appear in the problems. Similarly, with regard to cooperative trade, only examples which affirmed its superiority over private trade could be employed. Some teachers, especially in the provinces, who were not sufficiently experienced in the subtleties of this Soviet policy were not only fired from their jobs but even arrested for using the following sort of example in a dictation. "Three lean kolkhoz cows were grazing in a meadow." All these switches and changes unquestionably had their impact upon the quality of work done in the schools, but educational leaders were held less responsible for the absence of textbooks than for using ones which were "ideologically inconsistent."

Theater repertoires were also subjected to severe inspection.[1]
661 Everything even remotely reminiscent of Belorussian nationalism
536 disappeared from the stage, the artistic value of the play notwith-
626 standing. The First Belorussian Theater was forbidden to give Na Kupale, /On St. John's Eve/, a marvellous fairy-tale based on the national folk legend of the search for the "flower of luck" on the

[1] [After 1930, cf. pp. 32-33, category III - Analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It
was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in
Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka',
a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also
taken off the stage.

They[1] even turned their attentions to the traveling theater
661 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
545 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could
626 thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the
theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations.
The traveling company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles.
The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia
Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could
discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the
players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble
of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes:
white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs.
Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and
the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket,
only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national
poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal
of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523 A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict
supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of
the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the
main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt
on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This
is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh
Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions
upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was
broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of
national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

[1] [official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 — Analyst]

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
826 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any

1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the
first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

7: Krushinsky--38 G-4,5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

661 Everything which had been created during long years of active research in history, ethnography, geography, literature, art, and regional studies; the productions of gifted poets both young and old; and the research work of specialists were all heaped together as harmful National-Democratic rubbish once their authors had been arrested. Every Soviet citizen, especially those who had any connection with a book, could consider himself a candidate for arrest. Every intellectual was particularly diligent to destroy in time any books, newspapers, photographs, or pictures of those who had been arrested in order to avoid extra unpleasantness in the case he might have the bad luck to be arrested himself. Usually arrest was accompanied by a thorough search with confiscation of all photographs, even of people long since dead or of those who had no connection with the arrested person; private correspondence was taken as well as books and documents of authors who had already been imprisoned. All this was later analyzed and sorted out by the G. P. U. in its search for accusatory material. In this fashion valuable books, photographs of friends and relatives possessing great sentimental value, and family correspondence perished and are perishing in flames. People preferred to burn everything suspicious so as not to give the G. P. U. investigators the opportunity to dig around in it with their filthy hands or to ridicule a person's most sacred feelings during cross-examination.

626
661 Here is a short list of those works destroyed which are of general significance: 1) anthologies of Belorussian national art, 2) dialectal dictionaries of the Cherven', Mozyr', and Vitebsk areas, 3) four-hundred year old Belorussian printed matter, 4) the Belorusskii Arkhiv (a periodical). 5) all anthologies of the poet, Ales' Garun (who died in emigration), 6) the publications of the first congress of Belorussian archeologists and archeographers, 7) the publications of the Department of Humanistic Sciences of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences (comprising philology, history, ethnography, archeology, art, law), 8) the series of editions of Belorussian scientific terms, 9) material for the study of Belorussian scientific terminology, 10) Belorussian folk-tales, proverbs, and sayings, written down and arranged by A. Serzhputovskii. This is only an insignificant part of the colossal vandalism.

Out of fear even Soviet books were no longer displayed or advertised in the bookstores . . . All the propaganda posters with Soviet decorations which had been hung in public places disappeared.

626 Some particularly timid institutional directors hastened to repaint
661 their offices so as to cover the Belorussian ornamentation. /35/

It cannot be asserted that this "purge" of everything national in Belorussia, which so often led to absurdities, was carried out as a result ofspecial directives. It was just that the new leaders, particularly those who were above suspicion with regard to the national work, hastened to insure themselves against any unexpected troubles.

There was total havoc in the Belorussian State Museum. Every-
626 thing was radically rearranged, there were changes in the plans of
217 the work, and all the museum's activity was subjected to merciless criticism. The brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising L. Bobrovich, I. Shpilevskii, M. Grinblat, A. Levdanskii, in its "exposure" Etnografiia muzeinoe delo /Ethnography in the Museums/ wrote, "The National-Democrats chose ethnography as one of their basic objectives. Ethnography gives wide scope to the primary aims of the Nats-Dems . . . The ethnographic interest of the National-Democratic scholars was an adjunct to their politics." (page 151). The very purposes of museums were revised -- mass-cultural work among the broad masses of laborers was demanded from them, on socialist construction and class warfare. "First of all it is interesting to note how the Belorussian National-Democrats approach the role of a museum as such. The principle task of a museum is to collect, safeguard, and study objects of archeological, historical, ethnographic, and artistic interest which pertain to Belorussia (Kharlampovich-- Piatigodie Belorusskogo Gosudarstvennogo Muzeia /The Fifth Anniversary of the Belorussian State Museum"/ Nash Krai /Our Country/, No. 1, 1927, page 10). This is an old bourgeois proposition. Is a museum only a collection of interesting things? Is it only a curio cabinet? Is there not even any difference between a Soviet museum and the reactionary ones developed by students of local lore in the good old days?" (page 204), proclaimed the brigade of the Academy of Sciences. Museums were particularly blamed for not carrying on anti-religious activity but on the contrary collecting everything of value from the Catholic and Orthodox churches and the synogogues and preserving it lovingly. As a result of this reproof the museums changed completely. Everything reminiscent of the national essence of Belorussia vanished from the displays.

661 The Belorussian national movement was also charged with aiming to preserve religious feelings among the population and with

665 661 absurd, and the victim would not confess to the investigator. So he began to try to assure her that her "confession" was needed by the Party. In her simplicity Novikov stated quite reasonably that he, the investigator, was also a member of the Party and if the Party needed someone to admit to a charge of espionage, here he was presented with the opportunity. By a lucky chance Novikov succeeded in being released; a good friend of hers who was acquainted with an influential N.K.V.D. agent helped her. Novikov herself used to tell about this.

They arrested one member of the Komsomol. He was assigned the role of having spied for Italy. Knowing himself to be absolutely innocent, he stubbornly refused to confess. The investigator beat him terribly, put him in a cell, put him on the assembly line -- the fellow was unable to stand up under these methods and was ready to confess. The other prisoners in the cell took pity on the innocent youth, but of course they were unable to assist him. The Komsomel member, by the way, was a student in a school of design. There was one sharp-witted person in the cell, and he taught the Komsomol member how to "confess." At the regular examination he confessed that his contacts during his espionage activities had been the Italians Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and others. The investigator was overjoyed by the admission, having gotten what he wanted and complied with the wishes of his "superior." He fed the Komsomol member, gave him some makhorka, and sent him back to the cell. There he sat for about two more weeks, thanking his preceptor for the successful method of confession. /61/ He was called in again for examination. The elder investigator swore at him for turning the investigation into a farce, but the young man explained that his teachers had certainly been famous Italians. The ignoramus investigator had not had a notion who these world-renowned men were and believed that Raphael was an organizer of spy rings.

626 661 During the Ezhovshchina the Belorussian Communist press played an especially repulsive role. The so-called newspaper correspondents scoured the various Soviet agencies and institutions for accusatory material. In this work assistance was given by the directors of the secret departments of commissariats and other important establishments. These departments were called "special sections," and in most cases were under the supervision of the secretaries of the Communist cells. When some sort of evidence, no matter

2.6 how flimsy, had been collected, the newspaper, and particularly
1.1.1 the Communist Party organ, Zyezda would concoct an accusatory article in which no colors were spared in inventing ways to vilify the appointed victim. The facts were distorted and in most cases hollow, false, and obviously invented. At best anything positive was passed over in silence or it was presented as counter-revolutionary activity, as the intrigues of enemies of the people... After such a preparation the victim would disappear on the same day into the cellars of the N. K V. V. The existing prisons were not sufficient to hold all the prisoners, and old cellars and half-ruined storehouses had to be used; in Minsk, for example, a former monastery was adapted to serve this need. Arrests were made not only by the N. K. V. D., but also by the organs of the Soviet militia, under the pretence that it was for statutory offenses, and afterwards they were handed over according to special categories.

6.1.1 Citizen S. was arrested just because of this sort of accusatory and lying newspaper article in Zyezda. The police arrested him on some made-up statutory offense. While he was in police custody his wife with great difficulty succeeded in getting a chance to see him during his walk. He had not been accused of anything and had not even been examined. After three months he was handed over to the N. D. V. D. All attempts by his wife to ascertain his subsequent fate were unsuccessful. A year and a half after his arrest an N. K. V. D. agent appeared with a letter from her husband. He would not give her the letter but read it aloud instead. She maintained that the letter really looked as though written and signed by her husband. In it he begged her to send him a little fat and some warm clothing. The letter was taken back; his wife, however, was reassured by the agent who had told her that her husband's conduct was good and that he would be released within a month. The poor woman collected everything she had to make up a package /62/ to send the prisoner a little fat and some dried crusts. They took the package, and the woman sat up every night until morning waiting for her husband's return since there were rumors that prisoners were released from prison only after midnight. Eventually on one of these nights they came and carried off the woman herself, confiscating all her property and placing the apartment at the disposal of the N. K. V. D. Two homeless children remained, one twelve years old and the other four or five.

668 Only toward the end of 1926, after the most persistent petition-
●631 ing in the Kremlin, and at that time petitioning had not yet become
728 perilous, the question of uniting the Gomel 'Guberniya to the B. S. S. R. was raised. However M. Kalinin himself, the President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., came out sharply against unification. The Kremlin was forced to resort to a peculiar sort of plebiscite in order to refute the pretensions of the Belorussians. It organized a special commission with the Latvian, Peters, as president, which was to determine on the spot what language was spoken by the inhabitants of Gomel' Guberniya. It was decided that the population had forgotten its language and finally become Russified. No research was undertaken to determine where the population belonged ethnologically. The commission traveled around the sizable territory of the Gomel' Guberniya using the following method for its investigations: upon arriving in some inhabited place and meeting the peasantry, the members would enter upon some sort of unofficial conversation. This was taken down in shorthand, and an analysis of the notes refuted the calculations of those who had opposed the inclusion of Gomel' Guberniya in the B. S. S. R. The real reasons for the opposition to having the Guberniya transferred were of an economic nature. Gomel' Guberniya is very rich in various raw materials, especially high quality forests which are so situated that transportation of the wood is very convenient. It is criss-crossed in many directions by railroad lines and convenient water routes. A well equipped match industry is centered there, one which at that time was the most active in the U. S. S. R., and there is a paper industry in Dobrush. Obviously it was not intended that the economy of the B. S. S. R. be strengthened at the expense of that of the R. S. F. S. R. This is confirmed by the fact that such industrial centers as Zlynka, Novozybkov, Klintsy, and Starodub, all within twenty or thirty kilometers of Gomel', were not given to the B. S. S. R., simply because some match factories and other manufacturing are located there. The fact of the unification itself passed unnoticed by the masses. Gomel' Guberniya was included in the B. S. S. R. without the customary fanfare and pomp. /13/ The Belorussian nationalist circles were faced with new problems. It was indispensible to take all measures to include the new territory with its Belorussian population within the general scope of operations as quickly as possible, and, moreover, this transitional process had to be accomplished very carefully and painlessly. It all

669 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who 631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to 728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official 191 languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course 661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach, who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

563 Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in [692] Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population. In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

8: Redmer G-4 (no date) 1947 RCl Belorussia RCl

I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power: the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but very according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

185 471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Belorussian SSR is determined and directed by the State national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of strengthening the Belorussian SSR, and of consolidating the independence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Belorussian SSR work is a duty and matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Belorussian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

631 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

Art. 14. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Maghilev, Molodechno, Pinsk, Polessye and Polotsk Regions.

642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

645 by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and is subordinate both to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and the corresponding Union-Republican Ministry of the USSR.

Art. 50. Each Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it and is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 51. The Government of the Belorussian SSR or a Minister of the Belorussian SSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR within a period not exceeding three days.

Chapter V. The Local Organs of State Power

● 631 Art. 52. The organs of state power in regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 53. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are elected by the working people of the respective regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages for a term of two years.

Art. 54. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages direct cultural, political and economic affairs on their territory, draw up the local budgets, direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, assist in strengthening the defensive capacity of the country and ensure the observance of the laws and the protection of the rights of citizens.

Art. 55. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 56. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village is the Executive Committee elected by it, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary and members.

[623] Art. 57. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies in a small locality is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by the Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 58. The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village exercises guidance in cultural, political and economic affairs within its territory on the basis of decisions taken by the corresponding Soviet of Working People's Deputies and superior state organs.

Art. 59. Sessions of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than three times a year.

Sessions of district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than four times a year.

Art. 60. Sessions of Soviets of Working People's Deputies of cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are convened by their respective executive organs not less than once a month.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

631 Art. 61. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities or districts in big cities each elect a Chairman and a Secretary for the duration of their sessions to conduct the sittings of the sessions.

[623] Art. 62. The Chairman of a settlement or village Soviet convenes the Soviet and conducts its sittings.

Art. 63. The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organs of the respective superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 64. The superior Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Executive Committees and to suspend decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 65. The superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies and of their Executive Committees.

634 Art. 66. The regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments and Administrations of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Agriculture
a Department of Finance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Local Industry
a Department of Municipal Economy
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Motor Transport
a Department of Local Fuel Industry
a Department of Roads
a General Department
a Department of Arts
a Department of Village and Kolkhos Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the Region, the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the Union-Republican Ministries of Light Industry, Food Industry, Timber Industry and State Farms:

a Department of Light Industry
a Department of Food Industry
a Department of Timber Industry
a Department of State Farms.

[625] Art. 67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Union set up their own administrations under the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies, in accordance with the conditions of the region and on the basis of the laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Mogilev, Mosyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the city Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

652 646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652 631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

634 Art. 68. The Departments and Administrations of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the corresponding regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

● 632 Art. 69. The district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Roads
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Agriculture
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committees and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the district, the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the respective regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies:

a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Local Industry.

Art. 70. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Security set up their Departments under the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies in accordance with the conditions of the district, on the basis of the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR and subject to confirmation by the corresponding regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 71. The Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

633 Art. 72. The city Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Public Health
a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Public Education
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committees and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the city's industry and its municipal and suburban economy,

a Department of Local Industry and
a Department of Agriculture.

Art. 73. The Departments of the city Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the respective city Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding

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634 Art. 68. The Departments and Administrations of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the corresponding regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

632 Art. 69. The district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Roads
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Agriculture
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairmen of the Executive Committees and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the district, the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the respective regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies:

a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Local Industry.

Art. 70. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Security set up their Departments under the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies in accordance with the conditions of the district, on the basis of the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR and subject to confirmation by the corresponding regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 71. The Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

633 Art. 72. The city Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Public Health
a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Public Education
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the city's industry and its municipal and suburban economy,

a Department of Local Industry and
a Department of Agriculture.

Art. 73. The Departments of the city Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the respective city Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding

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633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mosyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the city Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

652 646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652 631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

631 Art. 61. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities or districts in big cities each elect a Chairman and a Secretary for the duration of their sessions to conduct the sittings of the sessions.

[623] Art. 62. The Chairman of a settlement or village Soviet convenes the Soviet and conducts its sittings.

Art. 63. The executive organs of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies are directly accountable both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies which elected them and to the executive organs of the respective superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 64. The superior Executive Committees of the Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Executive Committees and to suspend decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 65. The superior Soviets of Working People's Deputies have the right to annul decisions and orders of inferior Soviets of Working People's Deputies and of their Executive Committees.

634 Art. 66. The regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments and Administrations of their Executive Committees:

- a Department of Agriculture
- a Department of Finance
- a Department of Trade
- a Department of Public Health
- a Department of Public Education
- a Department of Local Industry
- a Department of Municipal Economy
- a Department of Social Maintenance
- a Department of Motor Transport
- a Department of Local Fuel Industry
- a Department of Roads
- a General Department
- a Department of Arts
- a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
- a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
- a Planning Commission
- a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the Region, the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the Union-Republican Ministries of Light Industry, Food Industry, Timber Industry and State Farms:

- a Department of Light Industry
- a Department of Food Industry
- a Department of Timber Industry
- a Department of State Farms.

[625] Art. 67. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Security and the Ministry of Justice of the Union set up their own administrations under the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies, in accordance with the conditions of the region and on the basis of the laws of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

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634 Art. 68. The Departments and Administrations of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the corresponding regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

632 Art. 69. The district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Village and Kolkhoz Building
a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Roads
a Department of Public Health
a Department of Public Education
a Department of Agriculture
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintenance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committees and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the economy of the district, the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments, subject to confirmation by the respective regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies:

a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Local Industry.

Art. 70. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of State Security set up their Departments under the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies in accordance with the conditions of the district, on the basis of the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR and subject to confirmation by the corresponding regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 71. The Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

633 Art. 72. The city Soviets of Working People's Deputies set up the following Departments of their Executive Committees:

a Department of Cultural and Educational Institutions
a Department of Public Health
a Department of the Municipal Economy
a Department of Public Education
a General Department
a Department of Social Maintanance
a Department of Trade
a Department of Finance
a Planning Commission
a Cadres Sector

under the Chairman of the Executive Committee and, in addition, in accordance with the specific features of the city's industry and its municipal and suburban economy,

a Department of Local Industry and
a Department of Agriculture.

Art. 73. The Departments of the city Soviets of Working People's Deputies are subordinate in their activities both to the respective city Soviets of Working People's Deputies and their Executive Committees and to the corresponding

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642 Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican
[701] military formations.

Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them. [846]

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

[641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;
b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;
c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;
d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;
e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;
f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;
g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;
h) Direction of insurance and savings;
i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organizations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;
j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;
k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;
l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernization of cities and other inhabited places;
m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;
n) Labour legislation;
o) Direction of social maintenance;
p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education;
q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of all-Republican importance;
r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;
s) Direction and organization of physical culture and sports;
t) Organization of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;
u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;
v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

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692 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

Art. 91. District and city procurators are appointed by the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR, subject to the approval of the Procurator-General of the USSR, for a term of five years.

Art. 92. The organs of the Procurator's Office perform their functions independently of any local organs whatsoever, being subordinate solely to the Procurator-General of the USSR.

Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

461 641 Art. 93. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to work, that is, are guaranteed the right to employment and payment for their work in accordance with its quantity and quality.

The right to work is ensured by the socialist organisation of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

Art. 94. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to rest and leisure.

The right to rest and leisure is ensured by the establishment of an eight-hour working day for factory and office workers, the reduction of the working day to seven or six hours for arduous trades and to four hours in shops where working conditions are particularly arduous, by the institution of annual vacations with full pay for factory and office workers and the provision of a wide network of sanatoria, rest-homes and clubs for the accommodation of the working people.

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641 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organisations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

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641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organisational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organizations,

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575 641 sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organizations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[687] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

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666 [64] Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR who has reached the age of 21, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualification, social origin, property status or past activities, has the right to be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

[502] Art. 112. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 113. Citizens serving in the armed forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 114. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

Art. 115. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 116. Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organizations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organizations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organizations and cultural societies.

Art. 117. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time upon a decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 118. Elections of deputies to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR are held by election districts on the following basis:

in elections to regional Soviets - one deputy for every 10,000 to 15,000 of the population, depending upon its size;

in elections to district Soviets - one deputy for every 1,000 of the population; in a district whose population does not exceed 25,000, twenty-five deputies are elected, and in a district whose population exceeds 60,000, not more than sixty deputies are elected;

in elections to city Soviets or city district Soviets - one deputy for every 350 to 1,000 of the population, depending upon its size; in a city or city district whose population does not exceed 12,000, thirty-five deputies are elected;

in elections to village or settlement Soviets - one deputy for every 100 of the population; in a village or settlement whose population does not exceed 1,000, nine deputies are elected, and where the population exceeds 2,500, not more than twenty-five deputies.

The basis of representation for each regional, district, city, village and settlement Soviet of Working People's Deputies is fixed in the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Regional, District, City, Village and Settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR, within the range of the bases of representation indicated in the present article.

113, 642 Belorussia RC1

[For comparisons of the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as amended through July 11, 1947, with other constitutions of the Sixteen Constituent Republics of the USSR, see 70: American Russian Institute, R1 Soviet Union, category 116.]

7: Krushinsky - 1 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

Belorussian Communism and Nationalism -- Personal Recollections

S. Krushinskii

Introduction: 1917-1920

668 The February Revolution of 1917 must be considered the turning point in the history of the Belorussian national movement. From the first days of the revolution there took place throughout all of Belorussia, especially in the future capital, Minsk, various congresses, conferences, and meetings in which, besides discussion of special questions, the problem of the future destiny of the area and its state structure occupied a position of by no means minor importance. All along the enormous front, in Petrograd, the Baltic Fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, in Odessa, and in other places, Belorussian officers and soldiers organized their own national committees and unions in, as it were, an answering echo to the activities in the homeland. Belorussians on the front were very interested in the political doings at home. Subsequently most of those who had organized committees at the front occupied prominent positions in national work at home.

Post-revolutionary events and the national questions raised by the masses required solutions and the acceptance of some kind of decisions. Searching for a solution, the political leaders of the time came to the conclusion that only a congress of delegates elected by the whole nation would be authorized properly to determine the form of the state structure of Belorussia, and likewise to resolve the most pressing post-revolutionary questions.

668 642 The First All-Belorussian Congress convened in Minsk from the eighteenth to the thirty-first of December, 1917. Of the delegates present 1,167 had a deciding voice and 705 a consultative voice. However the Congress did not finish its work and on December 30th was dispersed by armed units of Bolsheviks. The Congress passed on its powers for the conduct of further work to the Rada of the Belorussian National Republic, then and there elected at the Congress. The Rada chiefly utilized the underground to carry on its work under the difficult conditions of war and the Bolshevik terror. In its session of March 25, 1918, the Rada passed a resolution of historic importance for the Belorussian nation, known as the Manifesto of March 25. In the Manifesto it was stated that "Belorussia declares itself to be an independent National Republic."

I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power; the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but vary according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

9: American Russian Institute RCl Belorussia RCl
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[For the complete text of the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic of December 23, 1936, as amended through July 11, 1947, see cat. 116, entire source.]

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

CONSTITUTION (FUNDAMENTAL LAW) OF THE BELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

Chapter I. The Social Structure

642 Art. 1. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a socialist state of workers and peasants.

Art. 2. The Soviets of Working People's deputies, which grew and attained strength as a result of the overthrow of the landlords and capitalists, the achievement of the dictatorship of the proletariat, the liberation of the Belorussian people from national oppression by tsarism and by the Russian imperialist bourgeoisie and the destruction of the Belorussian nationalist counter-revolution, constitute the political foundation of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic.

Art. 3. In the Belorussian SSR all power belongs to the working people of town and country as represented by the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

471 Art. 4. The socialist system of economy and the socialist ownership of the means and instruments of production firmly established as a result of the abolition of the capitalist system of economy, the abrogation of private ownership of the means and instruments of production and the elimination of the exploitation of man by man, constitute the economic foundation of the Belorussian SSR.

421 Art. 5. Socialist property in the Belorussian SSR exists either in the form of State property (the possession of the whole people) or in the form of co-operative and collective farm property (property of a collective farm or property of a co-operative association).

475 421 Art. 6. The land, its natural deposits, waters, forests, mills, factories, mines, rail, water and air transport, banks, communications, large State-organised agricultural enterprises (State farms, machine and tractor stations and the like), as well as municipal enterprises and the bulk of dwelling houses in the cities and industrial localities, are State property, that is, belong to the whole people.

421 474 Art. 7. The common enterprise of collective farms and co-operative organisations, with their live stock and implements, and the products of the collective farms and co-operative organisations, as well as their common buildings, constitute the common socialist property of the collective farms and co-operative organisations.

[472] In addition to its basic income from the public collective farm enterprise, every household in a collective farm has for its ~~private~~ personal use a small plot of land attached to the dwelling and, as its ~~private~~ personal property, a subsidiary establishment on the plot, a dwelling house, live stock, poultry and minor agricultural implements — in accordance with the Rules of the Agricultural Artel.

423 474 Art. 8. The land occupied by collective farms is secured to them for their use free of charge and for an unlimited time, that is, in perpetuity.

472 Art. 9. Alongside the socialist system of economy, which is the predominant form of economy in the Belorussian SSR, the law permits the small private economy of individual peasants and handicraftsmen, based on their personal labour and precluding the exploitation of the labour of others.

421 Art. 10. The right of citizens to personal ownership of their incomes from work and of their savings, of their dwelling houses and subsidiary household

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

421 economy, their household furniture and utensils and articles of personal use and convenience, as well as the right of inheritance of personal property of citizens, is protected by law.

185 471 Art. 11. The economic life of the Belorussian SSR is determined and directed by the State national economic plan with the aim of increasing the public wealth, of steadily improving the material conditions of the working people and raising their cultural level, of strengthening the Belorussian SSR, and of consolidating the independence of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and strengthening its defensive capacity.

461 Art. 12. In the Belorussian SSR work is a duty and matter of honour for every able-bodied citizen, in accordance with the principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat."

The principle applied in the Belorussian SSR is that of socialism: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work."

Chapter II. The State Structure

631 Art. 13. For the purpose of mutual assistance among the Union Republics along economic and political lines, as well as along the line of defence, the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic voluntarily united with the other equal Soviet Socialist Republics, namely:

The Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic,
The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Kirghiz Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Tajik Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic,
The Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic and
The Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic

in a federal state, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Proceeding from the aforesaid, the Belorussian SSR ensures to the USSR, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, the rights defined in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR.

Outside of the spheres set forth in Article 14 of the Constitution of the USSR, the Belorussian SSR exercises state authority independently, retaining its sovereign rights in full.

Art. 14. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic consists of the Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Brest, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Minsk, Moghilev, Molodechno, Pinsk, Polessye and Polotsk Regions.

642 Art. 15. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic reserves the right freely to secede from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Art. 16. The territory of the Belorussian SSR may not be altered without its consent.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

642 [701] Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican military formations.

Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them. [646]

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

[641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;

b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;

c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;

d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;

e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;

f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;

g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;

h) Direction of insurance and savings;

i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organisations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;

j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;

k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;

l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernisation of cities and other inhabited places;

m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;

n) Labour legislation;

o) Direction of social maintenance;

p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education; +

q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of all-Republican importance;

r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;

s) Direction and organisation of physical culture and sports;

t) Organisation of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;

u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;

v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

642 the Belorussian SSR;

w) Establishment of the representation of the Belorussian SSR in international relations;

x) Organization of the military formations of the Belorussian SSR;

y) Legislation concerning marriage and the family.

Chapter III. The Higher Organs of State Power in the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

646 Art. 20. The highest organ of state power in the Belorussian SSR is the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 21. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is elected for a term of four years by the citizens of the Belorussian SSR voting by election districts on the basis of one deputy for every 20,000 of the population.

Art. 22. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR exercises all rights vested in the Belorussian SSR in accordance with Article 13 and 19 of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR, insofar as they do not, by virtue of the Constitution, come within the jurisdiction of organs of the Belorussian SSR that are accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, that is, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, and the Ministries of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 23. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is the sole legislative organ of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 24. A law is considered adopted if passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR by a simple majority vote.

Art. 25. Laws passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR are published in the Belorussian and Russian languages over the signatures of the President and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 26. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Chairman of the Supreme Soviet and four Vice-Chairmen.

Art. 27. The Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR presides at the sittings of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and has charge of the conduct of its business and proceedings.

Art. 28. Sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR twice a year. 643
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Extraordinary sessions are convened by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR at its discretion or on the demand of one-third of the deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 29. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, consisting of a President of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary of the Presidium and fifteen members of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 30. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for all its activities,

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

Chapter X. Arms, Flag, Capital

186 Art. 119. The arms of the Belorussian SSR are a sickle and hammer, against the rays of the rising sun, and surrounded by ears of rye, intertwined on the left with clover and on the right, with flax; below, between the two sheaves is a part of the globe. Both sheaves are intertwined with a red band inscribed with "Workers of All Countries, Unite!" in the Belorussian and Russian languages and, below, with the initials "BSSR". Above the arms is a five-pointed star.

Art. 120 . The state flag of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is a red cloth, with a gold sickle and hammer and a red, gold-bordered, five-pointed star above, and the gold letters "BSSR" above[1] in the upper corner, near the staff.

Art. 121. The Capital of the Belorussian SSR is the City of Minsk.

Chapter XI. Procedure for Amending the Constitution

642 Art. 122. The Constitution of the Belorussian SSR may be amended only by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR adopted by a majority not less than two-thirds of the votes of the Supreme Soviet.

Note: "Byelroussia" is now the correct spelling in English as accepted by the Committee for the Standardization of Geographical Names of the United Nations.

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000 This English translation was made from a Russian text published by the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1947.

[1] [Errata: should read "below" -- Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

III. BYELORUSSIA

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelorussia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. 101 186

Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelorussian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be. 186 642

Be. [182]

At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

Be [728]

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which territories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
BeloRussia RC1

S.U. 635 Be. 642 131 161 had such a poor view of the strength of the Byelorussian national consciousness that they confined the Republic to a small border strip of 20,000 square miles and 1,500,000 inhabitants. Important Byelorussian districts with the towns of Vitebsk, Gomel and Mogilev remained within the R.S.F.S.R.

It took the Soviet central Government three years to transform the 'token republic' of Byelorussia into one which comprised the bulk of the Byelorussians living in a coherent territory in the western part of European Russia. On March 3rd, 1924, the Central Executive Committee of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree on the 'unification of all territories of the U.S.S.R. having a majority of Byelorussian population'. As a result of this decree the B.S.S.R. was able to enlarge its territory to 42,000 square miles and its population to 4,200,000.

Even after the 'unification decree' certain Byelorussian areas of the Soviet Union remained outside the B.S.S.R. and on December 6th, 1926, a new decree was published to rectify this situation by adding to Byelorussia some further territories including the town of Gomel. Through this second operation Byelorussia became a country of 48,000 square miles with nearly 5,000,000 inhabitants.

Be. [101] The 1926 census showed that great confusion persisted in Byelorussia as to who was a Byelorussian and who was not. Thus out of 4,017,000 ethnical Byelorussians only 3,350,000 declared their language to be Byelorussian. On the other hand the census recorded only 383,000 Great Russians in Byelorussia, although 1,165,000 people considered Great Russian as their language.

Be. 565 464 The basic difficulty which the Soviet régime encountered among the Byelorussians was, however, not the language question, but the fact that the Byelorussian people had hardly any 'revolutionary vanguard' in the form of an industrial proletariat worth mentioning. The five predominantly Byelorussian Governments ('Gubernyas') of the Czarist Empire had in 1913 but 69,000 industrial workers of whom by no means all belonged to the Byelorussian people.

Be. 162 369 Although Soviet statistics claimed that Byelorussian industry increased twenty-one-fold between 1913 and 1937, industrialization and urbanization made less progress in Byelorussia than in most other parts of European Russia. The major Byelorussian towns did not share in the general speedy growth of Soviet cities, nor did any new 'mushroom towns' emerge. Of the 174 towns of the Soviet Union which in 1939 had over 50,000 inhabitants only five were in Byelorussia and the largest Byelorussian town, Minsk, occupied the thirty-second place among the cities of the U.S.S.R. Byelorussia's towns were in the inter-war period only partially Byelorussian from the ethnical point of view, since they all had very large Jewish populations and included also a considerable number of Great Russians. In 1926 Minsk had 43·6 per cent Jewish

557 been demoted . . . Sovnarkom President Goloded had become
665 temporarily unassailable, and in Moscow he was above any sort of suspicion. As for Gikalo, to be changed from party director of a republic to second secretary of an oblast', even one with heavy industry, was considered a step down.

After an absence of more than a year in Kazakhstan, V. Sharangovich was sent by the Kremlin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. It looked as if the Belorussian Communists had attained their heart's desire -- as first secretary they got a Belorussian who for the third time was returning to work in Belorussia. The ensuing year brought with it many griveous changes.

Yezhovshchina - 1937

643 /this spelling occurs in the original, otherwise the transliteration used is "Ezhovshchina." Translator/

661 In the middle of 1937, the president of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., Aleksandr Grigor'evich Cherviakov, committed suicide. A Belorussian by nationality and born in the village of Dukorka thirty-five kilometers from Minsk, he was a teacher by specialty, having graduated from the normal school in Wilno. In the First World War Cherviakov was an officer. The February Revolution found him in Petrograd where he subsequently organized the Belorussian soldiers of the Petrograd garrison. After the Bolshevik seizure of power Cherviakov entered the Communist Party. When on February 27, 1919 the so-called Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was organized on the territory of Lithuania and Belorussia, Cherviakov became Deputy Commissar of Public Education (1). From the day of /55/ the second announcement of the Belorussian S. S. R up to his death Cherviakov was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee and then of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. . He was not noted for his revolutionary activities. It is possible that in the

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1. Immediately before this Cherviakov was Commissar of Public Education in the first government of the B. S. S. R (cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsikopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1934 Edition, Vol. LXI, page 195/ (sic).

first years after the revolution Cherviakov was attracted by the idea of a national rebirth in Belorussia, and, like many other Belorussian intellectual, he hoped for a regeneration of the Soviet system and the creation of a Belorussian democratic republic. It was rumored that Cherviakov, during the Belorussian national movement of the NEP years, belonged to an underground organization of Belorussian nationalists (1). He understood the psychology of the national masses perfectly, especially that of the peasantry, and was a good speaker. In the first years of the Soviet regime, when possibilities were more numerous, Cherviakov did a lot of work. Of course he could not proclaim his own Belorussial laws, but anyone who was offended, hampered by his limited rights, or sentenced to a long term in prison or even death, found a possible source of assistance in the person of Cherviakov, that is, if assistance was still possible in any way at all. The peasantry, in particular, came streaming into his anteroom. His popularity was extraordinary. His official position permitted him frequent trips to the cities, towns, and villages of Belorussia. Not following the example of other Soviet leaders, he always tried to be with the masses, to see everything with his own eyes, to talk with the peasantry and the workers. Already as early as the thirties, every Soviet person, eminent ones in particular, had to be especially restrained, circumspect, and careful, not only in his actions, but in words, meetings with others, and conversations. As far back as the time of NEP, Cherviakov, while speaking at a meeting on a visit to Moscow, had been careless enough to repeat Bukharin's slogan, "Get Rich!" Subsequently this carelessness caused Cherviakov a lot of difficulties. Every climber and careerist, during the collectivization and afterwards, took every opportunity, whether or not it had any relation to the business at hand, to remind Cherviakov of this "cardinal sin." Bukharin was accused by using this slogan, of inciting to individual rather than to the collective prosperity which was to be realized through the kolkhoz and nationalized state industry. Cherviakov's enemies were always trying to pin a right deviation on him. However, /56/ none of the attempts to overthrow Cherviakov, especially those made by

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1. These rumors, more probably, were disseminated by the G. P. U. and are scarcely consonant with reality.

643 661 Secretary Gikalo, met with success. The Kremlin directed that he should remain as President of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. In his personal life he was very unassuming and not fond of any sort of pomp and circumstance. During a Party plenum in the conference room of the government building Cherviakov left the meeting, went into his office, locked the door, and shot himseld in the heart - with a revolver. When the door was forced open he was already dead. On the day after his suicide this little notice in small type appeared on the last pages of the Minsk newspapers: "Yesterday, due to family misunderstandings, A. Cherviakov, the President of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., shot himself." His corpse was displayed in the club of the labor union of soviet and commercial employees. On the day of the funeral a simple, rough, wooden, not even painted coffin was set on the platform of a truck, without any wreaths or the funeral ribbons with inscriptions which are usual in such cases and born off to the tomb without any funeral music. Nonetheless Cherviakov's funeral turned into a large, crowded, but silent demonstration of the population of Minsk. An enormous crowd accompanied the coffin; policemen on foot and horseback drove away the multitudes of people and ordered them to disperse, saying, "Well, you've seen the funeral, now move on." During the funeral procession, because of the massive gatherings of people, every sort of movement through the streets came to a halt. During the funeral itself there were no speeches or memorials. He was buried but not forgotten. For more than a year Cherviakov's tomb was always decorated with newly-cut flowers which his friends and well-wishers brought. His wife and two foster-daughters left Minsk after the funeral and were arrested later on. After his death Cherviakov left the most happy memories among Belorussians.

Osip Stakun was appointed president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. in his place. He appeared in Belorussia in about 1934 or 1935. We have no information where and in what capacity he had previously worked. It is known that Stakun had long been a member of the Communist Party, which he had joined even before the February Revolution, while a foreman in the Putilov Works in Leningrad. By his habits and bearing Stakun reminded one of the old Party intellectual-idealists, who payed little attention to their personal lives. He was pleasant with others and displayed no sharpness on the job. Coming from the Wilno province and

643 Belorussian by nationality he showed no interest in the Belorussian national work, even though at the time it was very muffled and suppressed. Upon his appointment as president of the Supreme Soviet the general opinion was /57/ that he would, to some extent, take the place of the intelligent and sensitive Cherviakov. However Stakun lasted no longer than three or four months as president, after which he was arrested. His fate is unknown. Then a certain Natalevich was appointed president. No one at all knew him; there were rumors that he had been a captain in the Red Army, but he certainly was never a member of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.. Nothing was known of his past. He lasted until the war, and apparently even during the war was still considered president since he remained at the post afterwards. What has happened to him recently is matter for conjecture since now there is another president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.

645 After Cherviakov's suicide the next prominent victim of
661 the Ezhovshchina was the president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R., Nikolai Goloded. He was not arrested when the secretary of the Party Central Committee announced to him that he was being recalled from his post. In his place another secretary was recommended, a certain Volkovich. Goloded was arrested either in Moscow or along the way. It became known subsequently that during the examination by the N. K. V. D. he threw himself from the fifth floor and killed himself. There are grounds for supposing that the N. K. V. D. purposely made his death look like suicide. We have already spoken about his career several times (cf. pages 43, 45, 51). He was president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. for almost ten years, taking the place of Adamovich who was recalled from Belorussia and shot himself during the Ezhovshchina. Goloded had an excellent memory as well as great ability as a director and administrator. He had barely finished the first three classes of the workers' school of the Agricultural Academy. However his natural abilities made it possible for him to cope with his responsible Soviet post. On the job he was secretive and conceited, and was able to bring others under his influence. He was not on familiar terms with anyone, and was always reserved. In Moscow he was able and skillful at promoting the cause of the Belorussian economy. He was on good terms with Molotov, Mikoian, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. However, all this did not save him from death.

661 his throat with a razor but was saved from dying. Possibly it was just this which saved him from arrest. Others who were not arrested were Z. Biadulia and the budding writers, Brovko and Glebko. /67/

After the Ezhovshchina

625 661 After the Ezhovshchina accounts were settled with those whose function it had been to execute the will of the organizers of the terror. However, this took place within the walls of the N. D. V. D. In Vitebsk a certain Grechkin who had been arrested and subsequently set free was summoned to the (N. K. V. D.) court to serve as a witness in a case involving the inadmissibility of torture during examination. The investigator had knocked out several of Grechkin's teeth and was found guilty, but Grechkin was compelled to sign a statement that he would not divulge any information about what had transpired. The document, I Accuse the Kremlin of the Genocide of My Nation, by Nikolai Abramchik, published in 1950 in Toronto, Canada, in English, will provide sufficient testimony to the deeds of the N. K. V. D. in Belorussia during the Ezhovshchina.

665 661 The secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, Volkov, was recalled from Belorussia after the Ezhovshchina and sent off to work in Mordovskaia oblast'. What became of him subsequently is not known, but the Belorussians will not forget this black figure who himself played such a very vital part in the slaughter ot tens of thousands of people. His cruelty was exceptional. P. Ponomarenko, who formerly had been a political agent in the Red Army in the Far East, was appointed first secretary. A new direction could be sensed in the Party's work, and this was particularly noticeable where the national movement was concerned. Formerly, national characteristics had been taken into account in various elections, appointments, and recruitments, but after the arrival of Ponomarenko the national problem ceased to exist officially. 661 The whole group of the former leaders had been destroyed.[1] 643 Natalevich -- a man little known to the Belorussian masses, lacking in authority and initiative, and obedient to the will of the secretary of the Central Committee -- settled down into the presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. To the post of Secretary of the Supreme Soviet -- who in fact was the deputy president -- a completely unknown worker from around Mogilev 661 was appointed. A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally

[1] [During the 1936-1937 political purge -Analyst]

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642 the Belorussian SSR;

w) Establishment of the representation of the Belorussian SSR in international relations;

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Chapter III. The Higher Organs of State Power in the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

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c) Gives interpretations of the laws of the Belorussian SSR in operation;

d) Conducts nation-wide polls (referendums);

[645] e) Annuls decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and likewise decisions and orders of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies if they do not conform to law;

f) In the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, releases and appoints Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, on the recommendation of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, subject to subsequent confirmation by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR;

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It is the duty of all institutions and officials to comply with the demands of such commissions and to submit to them all necessary materials and documents.

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Art. 37. The newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR not later than three months after the elections.

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[646] 615

Art. 38. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR appoints the Government of the Belorussian SSR, namely, the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter IV. The Organs of State Administration of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

Art. 39. The highest executive and administrative organ of state power of the Belorussian SSR is the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 40. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR is responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, or, in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 41 The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR, and of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and verifies their execution.

Art. 42. Decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR are binding throughout the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 43. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR:

a) Coordinates and directs the work of the[1] Ministries of the Belorussian SSR and of other economic and cultural[2] institutions under its jurisdiction; coordinates and verifies the work of the authorized representatives of the all-Union Ministries;

b) Prepares the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR, presents it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for confirmation and adopts measures for its execution;

c) Prepares the state budget of the Belorussian SSR, presents it for confirmation to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and adopts measures for its execution;

d) Adopts measures for the maintenance of public order, for the protection of the interests of the state, and for the safeguarding of the rights of citizens;

e) Directs and verifies the work of the Executive Committees of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies;

f) Sets up, whenever necessary, special Committees and Central Administrations under the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR for economic and cultural affairs;

g) Exercises guidance in the sphere of the relations of the Belorussian SSR with foreign states, on the basis of the general procedure established by the USSR governing the relations of Union Republics with foreign states;

h) Directs the organization of the military formations of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 44. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul decisions and orders of Executive Committees of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and likewise to suspend decisions and orders of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul orders and instructions of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

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[1] [Errata: should read "Republican and Union Republican Ministries"---Analyst]

[2] [Errata: "economic and cultural" should be deleted---Analy

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645 Art. 45. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR is appointed by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and consists of:

The Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Vice-Chairmen of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Chairman of the State Planning Commission of the Belorussian SSR;
The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR;
The Chief of the Arts Administration;
The Chairman of the Committee on Cultural and Educational Institutions.

Art. 46. The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR direct the branches of state administration which come within the jurisdiction of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 47. The Ministers of the Belorussian SSR, within the limits of the jurisdiction of their respective Ministries, issue orders and instructions on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR, of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and of the orders and instructions of the Union-Republican Ministries of the USSR, and verify their execution.

Art. 48. The Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are either Union-Republican or Republican Ministries.

The following Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are Union-Republican Ministries of the Belorussian SSR:

The Ministry of Internal Affairs
The Ministry of State Control
The Ministry of State Security
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs
The Ministry of the Armed Forces
The Ministry of Cinematography
The Ministry of Light Industry
The Ministry of Forestry
The Ministry of the Timber and Paper Industry
The Ministry of the Meat and Dairy Industry
The Ministry of Public Health
The Ministry of the Building Materials Industry
The Ministry of the Food Industry
The Ministry of State Farms
The Ministry of Agriculture
The Ministry of Trade
The Ministry of Finance
The Ministry of Justice.

The following Ministries of the Belorussian SSR are Republican Ministries:

The Ministry of Social Maintenance
The Ministry of the Housing Construction Industry
The Ministry of Motor Transport
The Ministry of Furniture and Carpentry Industries
The Ministry of the Municipal Economy
The Ministry of Local Industry
The Ministry of the Local Fuel Industry
The Ministry of Education.

Art. 49. Each Union-Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration of the Belorussian SSR entrusted to it, with the exception of only a limited number of enterprises, according to a list confirmed

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645 by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and is subordinate both to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and the corresponding Union-Republican Ministry of the USSR.

Art. 50. Each Republican Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directs the branch of state administration entrusted to it and is directly subordinate to the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 51. The Government of the Belorussian SSR or a Minister of the Belorussian SSR to whom a question of a member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is addressed must give a verbal or written reply in the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR within a period not exceeding three days.

Chapter V. The Local Organs of State Power

631 Art. 52. The organs of state power in regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages are the Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 53. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are elected by the working people of the respective regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages for a term of two years.

Art. 54. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies of regions, districts, cities, settlements and villages direct cultural, political and economic affairs on their territory, draw up the local budgets, direct the work of the organs of administration subordinate to them, ensure the maintenance of public order, assist in strengthening the defensive capacity of the country and ensure the observance of the laws and the protection of the rights of citizens.

Art. 55. The Soviets of Working People's Deputies adopt decisions and issue orders within the limits of the powers vested in them by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 56. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village is the Executive Committee elected by it, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairmen, a Secretary and members.

[623] Art. 57. The executive and administrative organ of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies in a small locality is the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary elected by the Soviet of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 58. The Executive Committee of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies of a region, district, city, settlement or village exercises guidance in cultural, political and economic affairs within its territory on the basis of decisions taken by the corresponding Soviet of Working People's Deputies and superior state organs.

Art. 59. Sessions of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than three times a year.

Sessions of district Soviets of Working People's Deputies are convened by their respective Executive Committees not less than four times a year.

Art. 60. Sessions of Soviets of Working People's Deputies of cities, districts in big cities, settlements and villages are convened by their respective executive organs not less than once a month.

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633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mosyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the City Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

652 646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652 631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

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Art. 34. A member of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR may not be prosecuted or arrested without the consent of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, or, when the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is not in session, without the consent of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

643 646 Art. 35. On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR orders new elections to be held within a period not exceeding two months from the date of expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 36. On the expiration of the term of office of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR retains its powers until the newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR shall have formed a new Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 37. The newly-elected Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR is convened by the outgoing Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR not later than three months after the elections.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

[646] 645 Art. 38. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR appoints the Government of the Belorussian SSR, namely, the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter IV. The Organs of State Administration of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

Art. 39. The highest executive and administrative organ of state power of the Belorussian SSR is the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 40. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR is responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, or, in the intervals between sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 41 The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR issues decisions and orders on the basis and in pursuance of the laws in operation of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR, and of the decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and verifies their execution.

Art. 42. Decisions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR are binding throughout the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 43. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR:

a) Coordinates and directs the work of the [1] Ministries of the Belorussian SSR and of other economic and cultural [2] institutions under its jurisdiction; coordinates and verifies the work of the authorised representatives of the all-Union Ministries;

b) Prepares the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR, presents it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for confirmation and adopts measures for its execution;

c) Prepares the state budget of the Belorussian SSR, presents it for confirmation to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and adopts measures for its execution;

d) Adopts measures for the maintenance of public order, for the protection of the interests of the state, and for the safeguarding of the rights of citizens;

e) Directs and verifies the work of the Executive Committees of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies;

f) Sets up, whenever necessary, special Committees and Central Administrations under the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR for economic and cultural affairs;

g) Exercises guidance in the sphere of the relations of the Belorussian SSR with foreign states, on the basis of the general procedure established by the USSR governing the relations of Union Republics with foreign states;

h) Directs the organisation of the military formations of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 44. The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul decisions and orders of Executive Committees of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies and likewise to suspend decisions and orders of regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

The Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR has the right to annul orders and instructions of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR.

[1] [Errata: should read "Republican and Union Republican Ministries"---Analyst]

[2] [Errata: "economic and cultural" should be deleted---Analy

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mozyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the City Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council
652 of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of
646 the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village
631 Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

number of "elevated" teachers. If under Soviet conditions, institutions are managed by non-specialists, then why could not elementary school teachers without an adequate knowledge be "elevated" into the post of lecturer at secondary schools? It has been proved that such "elevation" is practiced in Soviet schools. Therefore, it is not an accident that the knowledge of secondary school students is far from corresponding with the program of instruction and that there also are many who have to repeat a year. In the Klichev secondary school, for example, every fourth student "fails". (Zviazda May 23rd, this year). From these examples it is obvious that the majority of Soviet school teachers lack extensive, systematic study in the acquisition of pedagogical and, to a considerable degree, general knowledge. 875

The Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ministry of Education of the BSSR is called upon to study progressive methods of instructive and educative work, to give directives to the oblast' institutes in the task of improving the teachers. [647] ●

"Those few works which deal with the teaching experience which have been prepared and published by the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy, are of an informative character they are not profound in their content, and they lack scientific basis." (Zviazda August 4th, this year).

The oblast' institutes of improvement do not enjoy authority among the teachers. The function of these institutes is to analyze and generalize the best examples of the pedagogical work of teachers and then to introduce them in the schools.

"The people working at the Polotskiy Institute generally do not have a serious attitude towards their obligations. Teachers from the town and the oblast' do not feel that the Institute is improving teachers to the point of active leadership, or that it is actually helping them in their work", - this is how Ozernikov, a teacher from the town of Polotsk, characterizes the work of the Institute. (Zviazda, July 1st, 1953).

The immediate direction of school affairs is carried out by the rayon sections of national education through the appropriate inspectorship. The school inspector is the official state controller of the methods of school instruction, but he is also expected to help teachers with questions of instruction and education. But "in the apparatus of particular rayon sections of national education, and 871 875

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively
563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the
563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main
647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land, " and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very
[434] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no
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557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

557 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers
665 were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers, and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant
668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority, occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal
565 influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia, living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf. p. 17, Cat. 116--Analyst]

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,[1] taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter. [647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

185 433 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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[1] Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

[1] [In 1946--Analyst]

7: Krushinsky - 2 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

728 101 The Bolshevik regime took away the independence of the Belorussian nation by force. The region was first occupied by the Germans, and in 1919 and 1920 it became the arena of the savage and devastating Soviet-Polish War which came to an end only in November , 1920. The peace treaty which the Soviets and the Poles signed in Riga was tragic for Belorussia. In it a nation of eighteen million(1) was dismembered into three parts: about four million /2/ Belorussians were given by the Bolsheviks to Poland who, during her existence as a state tried, rashly but unsuccessfully, by every kind of intolerable method to turn Belorussians into Poles and Catholics. The Communist dictatorship was established over the remaining Belorussian territory. But even that remaining under the Communists was subdivided into two parts. Out of the six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya (1) the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (B. S. S. R.) was organized. The Vitebskaya, Mogilevskaya, and newly organized Gomel'skaya Guberniya remained included in Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic 644 (R. S. F. S. R.). The six uyezds of the B. S. S. R. represented a very convenient base for the postwar struggle with Poland. Starting in the very first days after the conclusion of peace with Poland, the Soviets used every means to try and arouse discontent and alarm among the population, especially the Belorussians, who had been left in the power of Poland. The Soviets also attempted to undermine the Polish economy which was rather weak. To this end armed units of the G. P. U. were organized in the border regions of Belorussia and sent into Western Belorussia. These units plundered and burned estates, murdered and executed policemen and government officials. A certain Mukha, the leader of one of these units, was particularly renowned. These "insurgents" always had a place of

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1. According to other estimates the Belorussian nation at that time numbered not 18 but 20 and even 24 million persons.

1. The six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya comprised the Minskoy, Borisovskiy, Igumenskiy, Bobrugskiy, Slutskiy, and Mozyrskiy uyezd.

648 refuge on Soviet territory, and meanwhile Soviet propaganda interpreted the "exploits" of Mukha and other units as the anger of the Belorussians nation against capitalist Poland. From the B. S. S. R. special propagandistic literature was sent into western Belorussia, as were Communists prepared for underground work who carried on propaganda there as well as organizing Communist and Komsomol cells. Nor did the Poles remain in their debt. They also organized units and forays into the territory of Soviet Belorussia where they ravaged the revisional committees and the village soviets, in some cases not disdaining to conduct pogroms of the Jews. The raids which were made upon the towns of Kopyl' and Koydanov in the Minskaya oblast' are well known . . .

668 The destructive war and the Bolshevik terror greatly weakened the national forces of Belorussia. A significant part of the active political workers who had taken part in the all-Belorussian Congress and in the further work of creating an independent National Republic were forced to emigrate across the border. /3/ Only a few individuals remained in Belorussia and their number was somewhat augmented by those who returned from the front. At the time, the national-democratic intellegentsia estimated the political situation correctly. The Kremlin and Poland were pursuing their own political ends, which were completely foreign to the interests of the Belorussian nation. Warsaw had set itself the goal of turning Belorussians into Poles in the shortest possible period. And Moscow had destined Belorussia to be a convenient ground for the preparation of its own specific measures towards the quickest possible Communist revolution in the West and as a first step in neighboring Poland. Belorussian national forces could not reconcile themselves to such a destiny for their country. Immediately after the Soviet-Polish War there were attempts to preserve their independence by armed force. The famous Slutskiy uprising broke out in the end of 1920; more than ten thousand fighters for freedom and liberty took part in it. The Slutskiy uprising was quelled by the overwhelming strength of the Red Army. Belorussia was then covered with a thick net of partisan units, some of which resisted until as late as 1930. A correct appraisal of the situation led the Belorussian national leaders to the decision to elect the path of lengthy, painstaking, and patient work within the B. S. S. R., involving the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses and the preparation of young cadres for active work. When the Bolsheviks were forced to give up

I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power: the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but vary according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

727 Reckoned in terms of 1941 state prices, the direct damage inflicted on the Byelorussian S.S.R. by the German military attack and the prolonged occupation has been placed at 75,000 million roubles (15,000 million U.S. dollars). This includes material losses due to destruction, damage, and plunder; and it represents 11 per cent. of the damage to the entire Soviet Union, which has been estimated at 679,000 million roubles.

The following table shows how Byelorussia's war damage has been assessed to the separate branches of the economy.

TABLE II

War Damage to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
(in million U.S. dollars)

Industry and building	1,263.84
Transport and communications	1,998.96
Housing and municipal economy	917.94
Agriculture	4,480.34
Commerce	141.22
Education	464.76
Arts	32.68
Public Health	122.12
State institutions	241.44
Co-operation	387.16
Public organizations	68.48
Religious communities	161.06
Personal property of citizens	4,720.00
Total	15,000.00

Note: Damage is estimated in terms of 1941 state prices: 75,000 million roubles, converted to dollars at the rate of 5 roubles equal one dollar. The present official rate is 5.40 roubles to the dollar.

Source: Statement by Mr. K.V. Kiselev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Byelorussian S.S.R., published in the Soviet Monitor, London, February 8, 1947.

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The Request for UNRRA Assistance

648 Rehabilitation work in the B.S.S.R. commenced even before the war was ended. Great assistance was given by other areas of the U.S.S.R., but so many of the economically important regions of the Soviet Union had suffered destruction that the help which they could provide was limited.

Early in 1945 it became apparent that both Byelorussia and the Ukraine would need further external assistance if they were to carry on

727 648 the full tasks of rebuilding homes, restarting industry, and working their farms once more. Therefore, in the summer of 1945 the Soviet Government applied to UNRRA for such assistance and strongly urged that 700 million U.S. dollars be allocated by the Administration for relief work in these two Republics. In August 1945 the Ukraine and Byelorussia were admitted to membership in UNRRA; and on December 18, 1945, after it was determined that they were not in a position to pay with foreign exchange for their own import requirements, agreements were signed between their governments and the Administration providing for the delivery of relief and rehabilitation supplies amounting to 250 million dollars - little more than one-third of the amount requested.

The UNRRA agreement with Byelorussia provided that 61 million dollars would be used to ship food, clothing, medical, agricultural, and industrial supplies to the B.S.S.R. The agreement also stipulated that UNRRA would attempt to deliver the bulk of these supplies to Byelorussia before June 30, 1946; however, because of procurement and transport difficulties, this proved impossible. On May 30, 1946, therefore, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of 1946.

On April 19, 1946, a small UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia and established headquarters at Minsk. The duties of the Mission were to handle problems connected with the delivery of UNRRA supplies, to work closely with the Byelorussian Government in ascertaining the needs of the people, and to observe the distribution of UNRRA supplies. As in all UNRRA countries, the Mission members have complete freedom of movement and observation.

Before the arrival of the Mission at Minsk, 29 ships carrying UNRRA cargoes had already landed at Soviet ports (from December 1945, when UNRRA shipments started, up to April 23, 1946). The Byelorussian Government estimated the tonnage received at 67,680 gross long tons, of which 58,000 tons were food; 3,939 tons, seeds; 3,905 tons, industrial materials; and 1,512 tons were clothing, soap, leather, tarpaulins, and rope. The government also reported that they had taken from the ports and distributed all but 22,000 tons of the supplies received by that time.

Members of the UNRRA Mission making initial observations reported efficient and equitable distribution of the supplies to those sections of the population which suffered most from the war. Practical use was being made of every scrap of material, and there was no evidence of waste. As at April 23, 1946, 40,000 gross long tons of food had been distributed among 12 regions and eight individual towns in Byelorussia. Eleven locomotives had been distributed to nine different points; industrial metals - copper, aluminium, and zinc - had been distributed in six of the war destroyed cities; and over 1,000 tons of seeds, to seven regions of the Republic.

648 262 It was in food supplies that UNRRA was making its greatest contribution. In all the shops, UNRRA food constituted the bulk of the supplies; and apart from bread, cereals, and potatoes, over 90 per cent.

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262 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

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185 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power,

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

IV UNRRA ASSISTANCE

In the original agreement between UNRRA and the Byelorussian Government was a provision that "within the limits of its resources" the Administration would strive to procure and deliver the full programme of 61 million U.S. dollars' worth of relief supplies for Byelorussia before July 1, 1946. In May 1946, however, when it became clear that the difficult world supply and transport situation would require at least an additional six months for the completion of deliveries, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of the year. Even at the end of January 1947, the programme was not entirely completed as the following table shows.

TABLE XII

UNRRA Programme of Supplies for Byelorussia, Compared with Shipments to January 31, 1947

	Programme (U.S. dollars)	Shipments to January 31, 1947	
		(U.S. dollars)	(gross long tons)
Food	29,710,000	27,918,000	94,660
Clothing, textiles, footwear	7,015,000	7,009,000	5,346
Medical and sanitation	1,002,000	699,000	163
Agricultural rehabilitation	5,622,000	4,416,000	6,680
Industrial rehabilitation	17,351,000	10,181,000	14,495
Totals	60,700,000	50,223,000	121,344

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

Food

In almost every month of 1946, food supplies made up the bulk of UNRRA's shipments to the B.S.S.R. As at the end of January they represented 78 per cent. of the tonnage and 55 per cent. of the value of all shipments. Largest items were (by volume) surplus army rations (36,000 tons up to January 31); 23,000 tons of fish, meat, and meat products, including a popular canned meat mixture known as tushonka; nearly 20,000 tons of dairy products, fats, oils, and soap; and 10,598 tons of pulses. A small amount of grain, soups, and beverages made up the remainder. It will be noted that no sugar, fruits, vegetables, or animal food were included in the UNRRA shipments.

Early observations by UNRRA Mission members confirmed that all food supplies were being equitably distributed by the Byelorussian Government

648 to the people in greatest need. Throughout the republic in ration stores, children's homes, hospitals, and rural communities, UNRRA food furnished the greater part of the Byelorussian diet in 1946, apart from domestically produced cereals and bread.

Clothing

511 In June 1946 the UNRRA Mission described the urgent need of the Byelorussians for clothing in these words: "The need for clothing is obviously acute. Most people are wearing old, patched up, and ragged clothes. At least half the urban residents seen on the streets and considerably more rural people are going barefoot. Those who have shoes to wear endeavour as much as possible to economize on shoe leather, and it is a common sight to see people walk barefoot where the road or street is smooth, meanwhile carrying their shoes slung over the shoulder ready for use when the road gets rough and rocky. At three factories visited, about half the workers were barefoot, and the remainder were wearing chiefly canvas shoes in poor condition...At the children's homes visited, the children as a rule were sleeping two in a single bed, narrow army-style cots, because of the shortage of blankets and bed linen."

648 The following table of clothing shipments to January 31, 1947, shows that finished footwear and shoe leather, and raw wool and woollen textiles formed a large part of the clothing programme for the B.S.S.R.

TABLE XIII

UNRRA Shipments of Clothing to Byelorussia up to January 31, 1947

	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Finished clothing	368	222
Blankets and comforters	252	139
Cotton textiles	278	154
Woollen textiles	1,288	524
Raw wool	1,134	1,244
Footwear	2,446	1,688
Upper leather	380	173
Sole leather	558	773
Miscellaneous textiles	80	58
Miscellaneous footwear	163	366
Unclassified	62	-
Totals	7,009	5,346

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

To certain classes of priority consumers for example, war orphans in children's homes, widowed mothers, war invalids, and factory workers,

648 UNRRA clothing and contributed clothing are distributed free. The local soviet in each instance prepares a list of persons eligible to receive such clothing. Otherwise, textiles and shoe leather supplied to Byelorussia under the UNRRA programme are converted into clothing and shoes at local co-operatives, or artels, which perform an important role in the production of consumers' goods in the Republic.

474 295 Typical of the producer co-operatives engaged in processing UNRRA-supplied textiles in the Novy Put Clothing Artel in Minsk which UNRRA Mission observers visited in November 1946. At this artel, garments were being made for war orphans cared for in children's homes. The finished garments were then distributed free of charge to the children, the government paying the artel for the cost of manufacture only.

Orders for the manufacture of clothing at this artel can be placed by organizations or by individuals; and as a general rule, the customer supplies his own materials and pays the artel only the established production cost. On orders placed by individuals, the production prices are, for a child's winter coat, 75 roubles,[1] for a woman's winter coat, 275 roubles, and for a man's winter coat, 250 roubles. Men's jackets are manufactured for 85 roubles, and trousers, for 45. Orders placed by organizations or wholesale outlets receive a 20 per cent. reduction on this scale.

The artel is organized on a co-operative profit-sharing basis. Its members are the workers employed in its shops and offices. In addition to their share in the artel's annual income, the member-workers are also paid regular wages for work performed. The monthly earnings of the employees in this artel were said to average 500 roubles. Earnings as high as 2,000 roubles a month were cited for cutters, but the majority of skilled workers earn from 600 to 1,200 roubles montly.

The artel "Novy Put" was first organized in 1928, during the first Five Year Plan. Before the German invasion in 1941, it had a membership of 400 workers, and in addition to the main establishment, it had four branches in various districts of Minsk. The membership, composed largely of Jews, suffered a very high casualty rate during the war; 90 per cent. were said to have perished at the hand of the Germans. In July 1944, shortly after the liberation of Minsk, the artel was reorganized; and it has been steadily growing both in membership and in output. By July 1, 1946, it had 110 workers.

The shoe artels are organized along the same general pattern as the clothing artels. In November 1946 the Red Shoemaker artel in Minsk was turning out a thousand pairs of workers' shoes and three thousand pairs of children's shoes per month.[2] The present membership

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[1] 5.40 roubles equal one U.S. dollar; 21.36 roubles equal one pound sterling.

[2] UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population,,as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped.

742 The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

● 648 742 Apart from the penicillin plant, other big items in the UNRRA medical programme include electrocardiographs, X-ray machines and film, and artificiallimb manufacturing equipment. Drug requirements have involved the procurement of quinine and, as a substitute, atabrine. By the end of January 1947, slightly less than one metric ton of atabrine had been shipped.

743 648 Not the least of UNRRA's contribution to Byelorussian health has been the soap supplies furnished. In 1946 the only soap available in the hospitals and sanitoria (and this means generally the only soap available anywhere), came from UNRRA sources. This was also true of a large part of the diet of patients, which came from UNRRA food supplies; and of blankets and bedding, which were distributed to hospitals and children's homes.

Still among the urgent requirements in Byelorussian hospitals are beds and bedding, laboratory equipment - including more X-ray machines, microscopes, stains and medea, drugs, and lamps - furniture, kitchen equipment, food, and soap.

Agricultural Rehabilitation Supplies

648 241 UNRRA agricultural rehabilitation supplies began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in February 1946 and consisted almost entirely of seeds. At the end of July the Byelorussian Government acknowledged receipt of 5,300 tons of vegetable and other seeds, which were estimated to be sufficient for planting from half a million to 600,000 hectares; and since favourable weather permitted late sowing, less than a thousand tons had to be held over for use in 1947. On all the farms visited by the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, the vegetable, clover, vetch, timothy and other grass crops had been started fron UNRRA seed.

Besides seeds - an important contribution toward increased food supplies - UNRRA has shipped fishing equipment, food processing equipment, and farm machinery - chiefly tractors. Deliveries of the latter, however, were heartbreakingly slow; and it was only in December 1946 that the first 221 UNRRA tractors arrived. The difficulty of procuring tractors has been one of the greatest obstacles to farm recovery in Byelorussia. The Mission estimated that had UNRRA tractors been available before August 1946, grain cultivation and production would have increased by 500 hectares and 500 tons for each tractor delivered.

Altogether, UNRRA plans to furnish over 800 tractors to the B.S.S.R.

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Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies

Shipments of industrial supplies up to January 31, 1947, amounted to 14,495 gross long tons valued at 10,081,000 dollars. Largest items were public utilities equipment (power generators, pipe for gas and water mains, etc.) and raw materials, chemicals and engineering stores. The following table shows the shipments by value as well as by tonnage.

TABLE XIV

UNRRA Shipments of Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies to Byelorussia up to January 31, 1947

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	Thousand U.S. dollars	Gross long tons
Transport and telecommunication	206	389
Public utilities	4,215	5,995
Building repair equipment	1,869	1,888
Mining and quarrying equipment	473	600
Machine repair equipment	811	274
Miscellaneous consumer goods	79	25
Materials, chemicals, engineering stores	2,433	5,173
Unclassified	95	151
Totals	10,181	14,495

Source: UNRRA Headquarters, Washington.

The first of these supplies arrived in Byelorussia during February and March 1946, and consisted of 3,000 tons of metals, tarpaulin, and rubber. A number of small locomotives for use in the peat and lumbering industries also arrived during the early months, as well as nine power stations and some engineering equipment, which were received in the second quarter of 1946. These first power stations have been followed by others; and by the end of October last year, 30 units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been received. Altogether, UNRRA planned to furnish electric generating capacity of 18,000 kilowatts in 65 units, ranging from small 15 kilowatt army surplus generator sets to two 2,500 kilowatt steam power stations.

Protocol Supplies

A large part of the industrial rehabilitation programme for Byelorussia has consisted of so-called "protocol" supplies - that is, certain items of industrial machinery and equipment which the United Kingdom, in a previous trande agreement, had contracted to furnish to the Soviet Union. After UNRRA assumed responsibility in the Ukraine and Byelorussia, negotiations commenced for the transfer of this equipment through UNRRA. About the middle of 1946 it was concluded that UNRRA would take over and deliver these "protocol" supplies as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme for these two Republics. Similarly, UNRRA became financially responsible for these protocol supplies which had already been delivered by the United Kingdom to Byelorussia and the Ukraine.

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By March 1, 1947, protocol supplies already dispatched to the B.S.S.R. amounted to over 3,881,000 dollars, and remaining shipments, to 132,400 dollars. Included in these supplies are power stations, pumps, telephone equipment, cranes and hoists, and electrical equipment.

U.S. Army Surplus Equipment (Surprop)

A second large share of Byelorussia's industrial equipment was acquired by UNRRA from U.S. Army Surpluses (Surprop) in Europe and the United Kingdom. The most important part of the equipment was approximately a million dollars' worth of heavy construction machinery selected from two depots in the United Kingdom, which UNRRA had purchased in their entirety. It was intended to use this equipment in clearing up the rubble and otherwise assisting the reconstruction of Byelorussian cities. The first shipments of surprop supplies for Byelorussia arrived in August 1946, and consisted of 45 two-and-a-half-ton trucks shipped from Marseilles. The government informed the UNRRA Mission that only eight of the 45 trucks were in good operating order; the rest were in very poor condition, and lacked essential parts. Inspection of the trucks by the Mission industrail specialist verified this report.

Inspection of further shipments which arrived in September revealed that they were in no better condition; and because technical manuals and spare parts were lacking, local repairs proved almost impossible. The surprop situation has since been made easier by the procurement of technical manuals from one of the depots in the United Kingdom. Later shipments have been inspected prior to loading, and the procurement of necessary spare parts initiated in the United States.

Distribution of UNRRA Supplies

UNRRA supplies for Byelorussia are handed over to the government at the port of entry, and the government is then responsible for arranging distribution. Like most other countries receiving UNRRA help, the Byelorussian Government has established a special organization to supervise the reception, warehousing, and distribution of all UNRRA goods received. Headed by Mr. Ivan S. Bylinsky, the Administration of UNRRA Supplies works in close liaison with the various Ministries of the Byelorussian Government and with the UNRRA Mission.

Most UNRRA shipments for both the Ukraine and Byelorussia have arrived mainly through the port of Odessa; and since early 1946 an UNRRA officer has been stationed there to handle problems connected with delivery. Before an UNRRA shipment comes in, the authorities at Odessa are notified of the ship's name, its expected time of arrival, and the nature of the cargo. As soon as possible after the ship lands, discharging of cargo begins. Stevedoring labour is supplied by the Port Commander's service organization, Inflot", which also furnishes checkers to work in the ship's hold and on the docks, counting the supplies and reporting any damaged-goods. As the cargo is unloaded, perishable items are placed in warehouses on the docks, and seeds in

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a warehouse in the suburbs of Odessa. Packaged goods, such as canned meat, army rations, and juices, are piled on the dock at shipside and finally into freight cars.

Directives for the distribution of the supplies are issued by the UNRRA Supplies Administration in accordance with a general plan embracing the whole supply programme. As soon as the government learns of the prospective arrival of the ship, specific directions are given, so that immediately upon the loading of the freight cars, the goods start off to their ultimate destinations.

Many of the items - such as metals and contributed clothing, which require processing or sorting - are concentrated in Minsk before final disposition. Since at present Byelorussia has no facilities for processing certain raw materials, these are sent to factories in other parts of the U.S.S.R. under contracts which provide for the return to Byelorussia of finished products such as transmission cables, trolley wires, babbitt bearings, etc. The same is true with respect to some of the shipments of raw wool, which were sent to mills in Moscow or Ivanov to be woven into cloth.

In every instance, the supplies are distributed to the neediest sections of the Republic, either free of charge, or by sale to ration card holders. UNRRA food supplies, for example, are distributed in four ways: (a) sales to the general public through government ration stores; (b) sales to certain categories of consumers through special outlets, including stores attached to factories for factory workers, and special stores for pregnant women, nursing mothers, and invalids; (c) factory cafeterias where workers may purchase low-cost meals; and (d) free distribution through hospitals, children's homes, and local village soviets in rural areas most heavily devastated by the war.

In 1946 somewhat less than half the UNRRA foodstuffs were distributed free to hospitals, schools, invalids' homes, etc., and the rest was sold through ration stores. UNRRA clothing is sold through retail outlets, or in factory stores; and contributed clothing is distributed free to hospitals, schools, and other priority consumers. Medical supplies are transferred gratis to hospitals and invalids' homes. Industrial and agricultural supplies, if capital equipment, are distributed free to collectives and other organizations; and if consumable supplies, such as metals and other raw materials, are sold. Thus industries buy the raw materials, but receive the use of locomotives and generators free of charge.

In rural localities, food and consumer goods are distributed through the local Salpo (rural consumers' co-operative society). In every rural raion soviet (which may embrace a dozen or more collective farm villages), there is a Salpo distributing agency, the management of which is elected by the local consumer shareholders. In the sections which had suffered greatest destruction, collective farms received UNRRA supplies - mostly seeds and army rations - free through the local Salpo. About half the more than 5,000 tons of UNRRA-supplied seeds were distributed free to Byelorussian farms.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

642 [701] Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican military formations.

[648] Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

[641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;
b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;
c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;
d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;
e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;
f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;
g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;
h) Direction of insurance and savings;
i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organisations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;
j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;
k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;
l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernisation of cities and other inhabited places;
m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;
n) Labour legislation;
o) Direction of social maintenance;
p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education;
q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organisations and institutions of all-Republican importance;
r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;
s) Direction and organisation of physical culture and sports;
t) Organization of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;
u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;
v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

633 Departments of the district Soviets of Working People's Deputies or directly to the corresponding Departments of the regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies.

Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mosyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the city Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

652
646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652
631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst.   (no date) 1950   RCl Belorussia RCl

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423 the land was hereditary property, which had the positive results of continual and steady use of the land and the negative one of constant subdivision of the peasant holdings in the country. The Bolshevik uprising did not bring about any significant improvements in the life of the small holders as sovkhozes and kolkhozes were organized on the large estates. Up until 1930, D. Prishchepov, a former Socialist-Revolutionary, was the head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture. He had managed to live abroad and become acquainted with agricultural conditions in Denmark and Germany. Upon his return to Belorussia he contemplated a series of measures which he considered the more useful since they were in accordance with the desires of the great mass of the Belorussian peasantry. So as to increase the land fund and distribute it among those who had little or none, Prishchepov managed to abolish a part, although an insignificant one, of the Soviet farms and also to bring about significant reductions in the land belonging to these establishments. As the basic unit of land to be used, Prishchepov chose the small village of ten to twenty peasant farms, with comfortable farmsteads of up to one hectare in size. /11/ [311] Even in those times it cost him[1] a great effort to prove the advantage of the small village over the large one as a method of land exploitation. The necessity of rapid reconstruction of the system of land tenure in Belorussia was obvious. In the first place there was the question of what to do with the reserve land which had been given for temporary use to the landless peasants and those with small holdings. Then, it was proposed to apportion crowded and disorganized large villages among small ones. Part of the peasantry wanted small separate farms under the new system, but Prishchepov could not officially establish separate farmsteads. In practice it happened as an exception that, when lands were being distributed in the woods, separate farms were cut out as well as small villages. . . To placate the theoreticians, 668 Prishchepov[1] had to assure them that it was very easy to make the transformation from a small village to an agricultural commune. Prishchepov knew quite well how absurd these assurances were, but being one of the leaders of the national movement he was guided by the interests of the country and not by the presuppositions of the 654 Communists which at the time were both unclear and confused. In addition to increasing agricultural assistance Prishchepov[1] introduced a series of measures designed to encourage improvements on the holdings of independent peasants. Various types of agricultural exibition

[1] [D. Prishchepov, head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture, beginning about 1920 to 1930 - Analyst]

654 were widely promoted by Narkomzem where diplomas and testimonials
were presented and prizes of goods and cash awarded. All
these measures of D. Prishchepov were subsequently brought against
him as accusations, to show that he was against the socialist forms
of agriculture and that his work was not only harmful but outright
sabotage.

423 The "gathering together" of the Belorussian lands and their unification
with the B. S. S. R. was completed only in the beginning of
1927 ... The question of consolidating within the B. S. S. R. regions
which were tied to it economically as well as having a homogeneous
population had been raised several times before the Kremlin ... The
problem was not solved until 1924 partly by the annexation of a
000 section of the Vitebsk and Mogilev provinces. On the occasion of the
annexation of these regions an extraordinary session of the Central
Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R. was convoked, with workers
and peasants also participating. The President of the Central Executive
Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., M. Kalinin, was present at the session,
together with two well-known Comintern figures -- the Poles Felix
Kohn and Tomasz Dombalj. During his own speech Dombalj turned
to the loge of the Polish counsul and cried out in a burst of revolutionary
enthusiasm, "Remember that only we have the right to speak
in the name of Poles and peasants!" Dombalj was a deputy to the
Polish Sejm and for belonging to the Communist Party had been tried
and exchanged for someone in the Soviet Union. The future Soviet
Marshall, Tukhachevskii, was also present at the session, and his restrained
and correct deportment contrasted with that of the Caucasian,
Gai, the commander of the Cavalry Corps, /12/ who paced up and
down nervously during his speech and shouted, "We will water our
horses in the Vistula yet!" The session was officially designated as
a triumphant celebration of the correctness of Soviet policy toward the
nationalities. M. Kalinin, by attending, emphasized the "voluntary
accession" of the territory of the B. S. S. R.; the Polish Communists
who were present demonstrated their solidarity with the Soviets in
questions of policy toward minorities, in opposition to the policy of
Poland which had taken over western Belorussia while General
Zhilunovich forcibly occupied Wilno. The speeches of Tukhachevskii,
the deputy director of the Red Army General Staff, and Gai, who had
taken part in the raid, on Warsaw, even though it was unsuccessful,
bore witness to the unsatisfied pretensions to Poland which were backed
up with armed might.

TABLE XVII

465

Average Monthly Earnings in Byelorussia, May 1947
(in roubles)

Government minister	3,000
Office manager)	1,200 to 1,500
Shop supervisor)	
Skilled cutter in garment factory	1,200 to 2,000
Chief cook	1,000
Assistant Cook	500
Chauffeur	700 to 800
Civil servant in government office	700 to 800
Skilled machine operator in	
radio factory)	700 to 800
match and plywood factory)	
garment factory)	
co-operative shoe artel)	
co-operative clothing factory)	
Waitress)	350
Charwoman)	
Factory apprentice (beginner)	200

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

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Proceeds of Sale of UNRRA Supplies

When UNRRA supplies are sold, the Byelorussian Government, in accordance with the terms of the UNRRA agreement, uses the proceeds for further relief and rehabilitation projects within the Republic. From December 1945 to the end of 1946, the net proceeds of sales (after deduction of distribution costs) amounted to 656,658,000 roubles, which were expended for health and welfare services; the rehabilitation of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries; industry and utilities; and on social insurance.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

644 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the State, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organisations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

575
641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organisational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organisations — trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organisations,

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

641 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

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GENERAL EDUCATION IN SOVIET BELORUSSIA

871 The development of Soviet schools in the Belorussian SSR during the first decade of Soviet rule took a somewhat different path from that in the other parts of the Soviet Union. Until 1921, Belorussia was an arena of wars and occupation, first German and then Polish. If the Council of Peoples Commissaries of the RSFSR decreed on August 21st, 1923, that the preparation of a project for general education should be undertaken, in the BSSR such a decree was issued only three years later, on April 7th, 1926. In the RSFSR lower and upper division schools were organized from the very beginning. In Belorussia the public schools adopted a seven year program which was separated into two divisions: the lower, comprising the first to fourth grades (the elementary school) and the upper, comprising the fifth to seventh grades. Technical schools of various specialties with four years of training included secondary education and paved the way to higher institutions of learning. The pernicious experiments of the State Learned Council of the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR affected the schools of Belorussia to a lesser degree. The People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR was headed by the intelligent pedagogue V. Ignatovskii, professor at the Teachers' Institute. His pedagogical experience and knowledge of public schools did not allow Professor Ignatovskii to take the road of careless school reforms. In 1929 he was accused ● [661] of national democratism, and committed suicide. In 1930, widespread arrests of educators took place. Several experienced pedagogues in the People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR were also arrested. After 1930, the original conservatism in matters concerning the schools of Belorussia was liquidated, and in the course of two to three years the schools assumed the monotonous Soviet form.

The Second World War quite definitely put an end to this chaotic educational regime in the Soviet schools and for many years [727] hampered the "completion" of general education. School affairs in Belorussia suffered particularly during the German occupation. Only through the great efforts and self-sacrificing work of Belorussian public workers and the local population, was it possible to arrange for work in schools and even to organize teachers' seminars during the war.

of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

Soviet propaganda falsely claims that the Soviet teacher has been raised to a level upon which the teacher in the capitalist society did not, does not and could not be, that the teacher is the central figure in the school. In fact, however, the Soviet teacher is the teacher with the fewest rights and least security in the world. The teaching ranks in Belorussia have several times been subjected to investigations and purges, thousand of teachers were arrested and deported to concentration camps. The older generation of teachers who survived the First World War and came back to their schools were immediately placed under suspicion by the Soviet authority. They were not trusted , they were considered enemies of Soviet projects. Teachers in cities and villages were subjected to mass arrests during the nineteen-thirties at the time of the suppression of the national democratic movement in Belorussia. Not only the old teachers, but also the young ones, those who had completed the Belorussian university, the pedagogical institutes, were sent to concentration camps in far-away Siberia upon the slightest suspicion of national tendencies. Teacher-experts in regional studies, collectors of folk songs, fables, proverbs, etc., were the ones who suffered particularly. They were all put together with the national democrats, the "enemies of the people". [661] The persecution of the years 1936-1938 definitively liquidated all those who were valuable and intellectual in the teaching profession. Thousands of teachers, male and female, were killed during the war. Those who survived and remained on the territory occupied by the Germans were, once the Soviet authority returned, subjected to cruel punishment and mass deportation from the regions of Belorussia. There are at the present time many vacant teaching positions in the schools. Thus, in the Bobruiskaya oblast'" ... it has become a commonplace fact that schools, children's homes, and rayon sections of national education remain without directors for several months. In the Klichevskiy rayon, for example, one can count eleven people temporarily performing the duties of directors and in charge of teaching in the schools. (Zviazda of May 23rd of this year).

A considerable number of teachers is inexperienced, without special pedagogical preparation, with a feeble general background and cultural development. The inspectors of the schools explain the failure of seven-grade school students by the existence of a large

563 87/ Less significant was the network of educational institutions where the teaching was done in Polish, although in Narkompros there were special inspectors for Polish schools. The reasons for this situation will be told below.

873 Narkompros[1] directed particular attention to the organization and development of the Belorussian State University. Through a common effort this young cultural center established a serious course of study and acquired a well-deserved prestige. In a comparatively short time a solid group of well-known professors had been chosen, among them the following Belorussian scholars: the popular and generally respected philologist Ia. Lesik, the mathematician Krutalevich, Piotukhovich, who was a literary specialist, Shchekotikhin, who was a professor of art, as well as others. It should be noted that the first graduates of the University, in 1931 and 1932, were better than the later ones. The reason is that despite the rather difficult conditions of student life they were not distracted into other pursuits. They were required to learn, not to participate in various bombastic political campaigns and social undertakings, which were the affair of the Communist Party. Afterwards, unfortunately, the examinations of student activists were judged according to their participation in 66/ political campaigns. A prominent role in the administrative organization of the University was played by the rector, Professor Picheta, a man who had been very successfully selected for this high post. Although not a Belorussian himself, he worked actively and conscientiously to promulgate all measures necessary for strengthening the University. He was arrested in 1930 and, like many others who were arrested that same year, subjected to "investigation" because of a "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" (the S. V. B. - in Belorussian "Sayuz Vyzvalen'nya Belorusi"), which was created at the time by the G. P. U. of the B. S. S. R. More will be said about this below. In the activity of the S. B. V. according to the "plan" (or as popularly put the "tale") of the G. P. U., Professor Picheta was to play the part of a "connecting link" between the S. B. V. and the "Union for the Liberation of Russia", also created for the occasion by the G. P. U. in Russia, which was to be headed by the well-known academician Platonov, a historian like Picheta. After the failure of the "activities" of the S. B. V., Professor Picheta, like the others, was sent into exile and served it in the city of Vyatka where he distributed tickets in the city dining rooms. Due to the stubborn petitions

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

661 of his wife who had stayed in Moscow, he was liberated in 1934 by the personal intercession of Stalin in the Central Executive Committee of the U. S. S. R. and went back to Moscow. He became a corresponding member of the All-Union Academy of Sciences, and when the political situation demanded that the Kremlin organize a Slavonic Committee, Professor Picheta was used to work on it. He died about three years ago, and in the Soviet press his death was noted as that of an outstanding scholar and, of course, a patriot. /7/

873 To further scientific work and unite the efforts of scientific and cultural workers, the Institute of Belorussian Culture (Inbelkul't) was set up in Minsk with Professor Ignatovskii as its head.[1] Relatively quickly, this Institute laid the foundations for the organization of a Belorussian Academy of Sciences. Then it was filled with graduate students from the first graduating classes of the University. Professor Ignatovskii left Narkompros and became the president of the Academy of Sciences.

874 In addition to the University of Belorussia the former Agricultural Institute was still functioning. At first it was located in Minsk but then changed its name to the Agricultural Academy and moved to the city of Gori-Gorkiy in the Orshanskiy Okrug. There it had plots of land for practical work and the appropriate laboratories. The agricultural high school had been there before the revolution, and the Higher Agricultural Institute before the Polish uprising of 1863. In addition there was a Veterinary Institute in Vitebsk. The Agricultural Academy and the Veterinary Institute were under the control and direction of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R.

871 The Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. developed and put into effect a national educational system which was adapted to Belorussian conditions and differed somewhat from that of the R. S. F. S. R.[1] In the latter, the training comprised essentially a ten-year course of general education, while according to the system of the Narkompros of Belorussia the basis was a seven-year course of general education divided into two parts, comprising four and three years respectively. The academic year of 1925-1926 was the first year when the plan of general compulsory education on the basis of the first part of the seven-year course went into effect. (1) In the towns education was

1. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskai Entsiklopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1927 edition, Vol. V, p. 409.

[1] [Beginning about 1930, cf. pp. 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

814 literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of [661] folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovsh china) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, 14. pp 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

669 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

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191 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
●661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach, who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

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[692] Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population. In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

[762] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native
563 Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five
[778] percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish
563 language and were Belorussian by nationality. In the heyday of the
661 nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The
563 Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

557 665 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers, and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant 668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign,[1] to send out their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority, occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 565 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia, living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf. p. 17, cat. 116--Analyst]

661 kept in operation through private donations. Belorussian students 553 could not enter the higher schools. The national social organization "Belorusskaia Gramada," which had 120,000 members, was closed and its leaders tried and imprisoned. The Orthodox clergy had to use Polish to preach in the churches and to teach the Law of God in the schools. The population of western Belorussia knew that in the B.S.S.R. a state was being built, that /17/ the official language was Belorussian, that a Belorussian Academy of Sciences, a State University, and other institutions of higher learning were in existence and that admission to them did not present any particular difficulties--on the contrary there were the so-called workers' high schools which prepared those who lacked secondary education for admission into the universities. National theaters were in operation, and literature 661 and poetry flourished. The Soviet press, which penetrated into western 166 Belorussia, as well as the radio and underground Communist organizations intensified their propaganda about the work in the B.S.S.R.. The Soviet Consulate in Warsaw, by using the Deputy Consul Ul'ianov who was himself from a Minsk family, generously supplied dollars to finance anti-Polish propaganda, the pro-Communist press, and various organizations in western Belorussia. As a result of this, hundreds of young people streamed across the border into the B.S.S.R., illegally and at great risk and danger to themselves, in the hopes of getting into the bright lecture halls of the University of Belorussia. The intelligentsia also crossed the border to find work and to find some scope for their abilities. How much bitter disillusionment there was after 1930, how much inconsolable grief and sorrow for their unfulfilled hopes and broken young lives. Led by their enthusiasm, they trustingly dashed into the perfidious and deceiving Soviet flame. Who could have supposed then that this great constructive work would be pitilessly crushed and that thousands of Belorussians would perish in the cellars of the N.K.V.D. or in concentration camps.

First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Community Party of Belorussia

665 Up to 1930 there were several first secretaries of the Communist Party of Belorussia. All of them were envoys of the Kremlin, in fact plenipotentiaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union--guardians, preservers and exponents of the general line of the

665 sent by the Politburo in the persons of the first secretaries, in the 186 majority of cases adopted a strictly formal attitude toward the national work. It is possible that only Knorin really understood the situation. Secretary Krinitskii learned Belorussian and occasionally made speeches in it, but even so it was only to produce a good impression on the Kremlin and in order to assist his Party career in this way, that he did it.

The First Victims

Up to 1930, there had only been one trial aimed directly at a 961 nationalist. In 1926, Iu. Listopad, a non-Party teacher of Belorussian in the high schools, was arrested in Slutsk. He was tried in Minsk for organizing some sort of plot against the Soviet Authority. The trial was open to the public, and there were lawyers for both the presecution and defense. The students gave Listopad stormy ovations, and flowers were even brought to him during the trial. However the whole affair was cleverly and insidiously organized. The judges were members of the Belorussian intelligentsia and the Public Prosecutor, a well-known nationalist writer, D. Zhilunovich. /20/ It was all so well arranged that even Listopad's warmest supporters were forced to judge and condemn him. He was sentenced to five years in a reformatory--as the prisons were still called at that time. The shadows continued to thicken even after Listopad's trial had been forgotten. The twilight of the NEP was coming, and by the end of 1928 the cities were beginning to feel the shortage of agricultural products. In the Ukraine and other grain producing areas the Soviet regime was beginning to organize the first Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), the forerunners of the collectivization which was soon to sweep over the peasantry.

In the beginning of 1931, Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii, an academician and the leader of the Belorussian nationalists, fell a victim of the B.P.U. He had been called in for interrogation and afterwards shot himself in his own apartment. (1)

1. The suicide of Professor Ignatovskii was the last, as well as the most decisive act in the particular "case" of the S.V.B.* with which the G.P.U. had intended to connect him. The "case" was closed, and all those implicated were sent into exile in administrative functions--only the Communists Balitskii, Prishchepov, Al. Adamovich, and Il'iuchenos /sic/ were sent to concentration camps.

* Belorussian abbreviation, Cf. p. 6 meaning:Union for the liberation of Belorussia.

● 661 Professor Ignatovskii was widely known and very popular for his prominent activities. In those days the G. P. U. did not yet dare to throw him in a cellar and make short work of him. As a result of his suicide there were persistent rumors that the G. P. U. had succeeded in getting Professor Ignatoviskii to name those members of the national movement who had taken upon themselves to check the Soviet regime in Belorussia and establish a democratic system. The professor preferred death, but even before his suicide the movement had been dealt a telling blow by the arrest of the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R., Dimitrii Prishchepov. Himself a son of the people and a former teacher he was well able to understand the age long striving of the Belorussian peasant for a private farm of his own. He knew the reasons for the backwardness, poverty, and need 241 of the countryside. Before collectivization, his[1] activities had been 423 directed toward strengthening the private working peasant's position 661 by building them homesteads which were generally grouped in small hamlets but frequently isolated. This arrangement gave the peasant wide scope for his own initiative, and he could also draw on state agricultural assistance. /21/ This tendency in the work of the People's Commissariat of Agriculture turned out to be in complete contradiction to the Kremlin's avowed policy of collectivizing agriculture, and besides, an unheard of tempo of collectivization was demanded, with the country's total efforts directed at the destruction of the private peasants' farmstead to be replaced by the other, so-called socialist, form of agriculture. The most prosperous farms were ruined completely and their proprietors assigned to the outlawed category of kulaks -- then they were carted away under inhuman conditions and sent out to the most godforsaken and uninhabited regions of Siberia. The peasants who still remained unsubdued were tagged as podkulachnik' and subjected to public persecution and economic pressure in the form of a high head tax -- in spite of the fact that these peasants were the ones who had most of the diplomas and certificates which the Soviet government had given out for high showings in animal husbandry, gardening, truck 661 farming, etc. The People's Commissariat of Agriculture had to play first violin in this destruction -- in other words it had to destroy

[1] [D. Prishchepov, Peoples Commissar of Agriculture to 1930 - Analyst]

661 pitilessly everything that had been created as a labor of love during the NEP. New people were needed, and Prishchepov was classed as an enemy of the people, a wrecker, middleman, protector of the kulaks, and a promulgator of the private homesteads and small villages which were so harmful to the socialist forms of agriculture. In official documents and propaganda his work was contemptuously called the "prishchepovshchina." However, the besmirched activities of Prishchepov the People's Commissar of Agriculture, left a happy and lasting memory among the Belorussian peasantry.

The death of the academician, Professor Ignatovskii, and the arrest of D. Prishchepov were not isolated instances. Almost simultaneously a large group of culturally and economically prominent figures were arrested, among them the very popular philologist and academician Ia. Lesik, the renowned Belorussian geographer and economist, Academician Smolich, the Secretary of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, Academician V. Lastovskii, Picheta, who was rector of the University, and others.

665 625 There were changes in the attitude and approach of the G. P. U. This organization received a standing order which was not to be changed for the arrest of Party members. As late as 1930, the G. P. U. had quite openly not meddled in the internal affairs of the Communist Party as the Party itself held court over its unsubmissive members and administered punishment. It had its own controlling and punitive organs in the Central Control Commission which had its plenipotentiaries throughout the republics and oblasts.... /22/

Anton Balitskii and the "Odessa" Group (1)

1. For information on the "Odessites" see the article by A. Sakovich, "Belorussi v Odesse" /"Belorussians in Odessa" Beda, /Misery/ No. 5 (10), May, 1952.

661 The People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, was also a victim of the G. P. U. Until 1928 he was a deputy in the Narkomat, but even then he actually directed all its activities. Professor V. Ignatovskii had many other responsibilities besides the Narkomat of Public Education. He devoted a lot of attention to the Institute of Belorussian Culture and gave lectures at the University and in the Agricultural Institute; literary and scientific work also took up a lot of his time. He had written several studies of

Belorussian history and his Korotkii Ocherk po Istorii Belorussi /Short Essay on Belorussian History/ remained a basic text in the high schools until his death.

In the first part of 1950 A. Balitskii was fired from his job in the Narkompros /People's Commissariat of Public Education/ but even after this was not arrested. Evidently the G. P. U. had not yet worked out a plan for the "major" arrests. It had to have some evidence to try him for implication in a plot. In effecting this the G. P. U. considered it fundamental to enlarge and fill in the accusatory evidence with the testimony of various individuals who would later be arrested. At the time the arrest of these distinguished members of the Republic was still a sensation, and no one was yet accustomed to mass arrests. The Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, after firing Balitskii from the Narkompros, passed a resolution to demote him to so-called lower level work as an agitator and propagandist in the railroad shops of Gomel'. This decision was obviously the consequence of pressure brought by Belorussian members of the Bureau, who contemplated removing him from the limelight for a while so that people in Minsk would forget about him. The official motivation for such a decision was to give A. Balitskii, after his many blunders, a chance to reforge himself in the workingman milieu of a large factory such as the shop in Gomel', where more than two thousand laborers were working and which was considered to be functioning under Belorussian conditions. It should be pointed out that A. Balitskii possessed great organizational abilities, the capacity for work, and the knack of picking out the necessary capable assistants. Under his guidance there had been worked out and put into practice rather successfully a general plan of initiating universal compulsory courses in the Belorussian educational system./23/ The old teacher, Dm. Stsetsuro also put a lot of effort and his enormous practical experience into this project. Balitskii belonged to the so-called group of Belorussian "Odessites". While an officer in the First World War he, together with other members of the army on the Rumanian Front, had organized the Belorussians in the front lines after the February Revolution. This group of organizers than became located in Odessa and kept up connections with the nationalist workers in Minsk. After the front collapsed the Germans occupied a sizable share of Belorussian territory, and the Bolsheviks set themselves the task of "liberating" Belorussia with Red Army detachments. At the time a very prominent Belorussian named Stepan Nekrashevich was in Odessa with Balitskii.

66/Afterwards he put a lot of work into organizing the Institute of Belorussian Culture and later was President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In Odessa on January 13, 1919, Nekrashevich was careless enough to greet the French general, Bartel, in the name of the Belorussians. This became known in Minsk and when the National-Democrats were being dispersed, S. Ia. Vol'fson in his work against them, Ideologiia i Metodologiia Natsdemovshchiny, /The Ideology and Methodology of the National-Democrats/ wrote, "S. Nekrashevich welcomed General Bartel in Odessa, 'On behalf of the National Center of Belorussia, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the South of Russia, who bring us not only the hope but, I would say, the guarantee of a speedy liberation from the oppressions of the Bolsheviks who for more than fifteen months have been devastating our country' ... Nekrashevich begged General Bartel for armed assistance." (pages 69-70)

Belorussia became Soviet; Belorussians and Odessites, returned to Minsk, and the majority of them held responsible positions. The welcome Nekrashevich had extended to General Bartel was not forgotten, however, but was unearthed from the archives and figured on every occasion as a shining example of the political untrustworthiness not only of himself but of the whole group of "Odessites." The calculations of the Belorussians were not justified. His appointment to Gomel' did not save him from the G.P.U. He was arrested before he even started work there, condemned, and sentenced to work out his term of punishment on Medvezh'ja Gora near the construction of the White Sea Canal. Evidently Balitskii died there since we have no more information about him. His wife's death was also tragic. Being a doctor of medicine she was not arrested but later went insane.

Zhilunovich and the "Nats-Dems" /24/

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668 The Belorussian State Publishing House played a prominent role in the national work. It was the only institution of this kind in Belorussia and issued all printed matter with the exception, of course, of newspapers and periodicals. This publishing house also regulated the priority of everything else published. It was headed by the outstanding Belorussian writer and politician of the older generation, Dimitrii
668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartny!).

668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartnyi). Evidently it was a lot harder to square accounts with him, since he was the organizer of the B. S. S. R. and the first president of its government; Stalin knew him personally as he was Commissar of Nationalities when Soviet Belorussia was being organized. However, Zhilunovich was removed from the directorship of the press even though he was left in the Party.
668 The fate of the creator* of the B. S. S. R. is tragic and instructive.
661 Coming from a workingman's family in the revolutionary town of Kopyl', Minsk Guberniya, his life was difficult and eventful. Unlike other remote towns, Zhilunovich's birthplace distinguished itself by the organized revolutionary activity of its population. This is witnessed by the fact that in 1905 the government had to detail a whole company to this locality to preserve order. In those days it was possible to meet representatives of all the revolutionary parties here -- Socialist-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats, Narodniks, and a rather large number of Bundists. Zhilunovich spent his childhood and early years in this revolutionary environment, working as a tanner; later he went to big cities like Riga and St. Petersburg. In 1917 he was immersed in revolutionary activity up to his ears, he even laid aside his writing. During the NEP, while the Soviet power was becoming stabilized in Belorussia, simultaneously, significant successes were being attained in the national work. Zhilunovich, and other nationalists with him, drew some erroneous conclusions and committed a series of political mistakes. A convinced democrat and nationalist, he put a high value on the culture and way of life of the West. He admired the order and organization of German life, where he had spent more than a year while directing the printing of textbooks for Belorussian schools. He sincerely believed that the B. S. S. R. was going to be a national, democratic republic. Many of the Belorussian politicians of the time shared this mistaken view and Moscow made use of it. Zhilunovich was entrusted with the mission of "persuading" Belorussian emigrants, and especially former members of the government of the Belorussian National Republic, to give up their mandates from the /25/ Belorussian Congress and return to Minsk where they would be given responsible posts. Not yet experienced in the Kremlin's methods a number of eminent Belorussian politicians listened to these persuasions and returned to their homeland. They were all subsequently liquidated by the G. P. U.

In 1926, Zhilunovich was one of the initiators and organizers of the Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography

*[Dimitri Zhilunovich - Analyst]

LL8 LL1 and alphabet. Many Belorussian emigrants came from abroad to be present at it. The brigade of the Marxist-Leninist department of the philological section of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, in exposures of National-Democracy, writes about the Conference as follows, "The Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography and alphabet was in fact an open demonstration by National-Democratic counter-revolutionary forces - those in the B. S. S. R. as well as those who were abroad at the time and came to the Conference from their emigration -- Lastovskii, Ezovitov, Zhilka, Golovinskii, and others" (pages 110-111). In the hall where the Academic Conference was held there were no portraits of the leader, no Soviet flag, and naturally no propagandistic slogans of any kind. All this was possible, of course, in 1926, when they were trying to show the Belorussian emigrants that cultural activity in the B. S. S. R. has no connections with political affairs. Zhilunovich paid dearly for all this, from 1930 until his very death. Everything was brought up against him, and in 1933 he was expelled from the Party during the purge. At the end of 1936 or the beginning of 1937, he was arrested. He went out of his mind from the tortures and torment of cross-examination and was sent to Mogilev to the prisoners' division of a hospital for the mentally ill. There he either died or was poisoned. In the same year, one of his admirers, peculiarly enough a chief of the regional militia, secretly tried to find out where this martyr was buried. But the G. P. U. is good at hiding its tracks and the search met with no success whatsoever.

Mass Arrests in Minsk --1930-1931

LL1 Mass arrests took place in Minsk in the middle of 1930. The provinces escaped almost unscathed, but prominent Belorussian cultural figures were arrested from the Academy of Sciences, the University, the Narkompros, and some in the Narkomzem /People's Commissariat of Agriculture/. Among those arrested was People's Commissar of Agriculture Prishchepov's deputy, Aleksandr (Ales') Adamovich -- and "Odessite" like Balitskii and Nekrashevich. While still a youth he had participated ardently in the work of the Bobrujsk Uyezd, Minsk Guberniya. /26/ After several years his ardor cooled, and in about 1925 he became a zealous nationalist. To his confederates, Adamovich whole-heartedly and sincerely confessed and repented that during the first years of his Soviet work, LLl

because of inexperience, he had not been sufficiently sensitive to the needs of the disinherited Soviet peasantry. Quite soon he grew wise to the intent, course, and tactics of the Communist Party. Even when in prison in Minsk he was absolutely undismayed by his arrest and according to the accounts of eyewitnesses would have been rather chagrined if by some miracle he had been released. They sent him to work out his sentence in the Solovetskiy Concentration Camp. One of the surviving inmates of that camp, the Ukrainian Pidhainyl, writes in his memoirs under the title, Nedostreliannye /The Unexecuted : literally means 'The Not Completely Executed' -- Translator./ on page 115, about Adamovich, "To tell the truth I did not come across Adamovich at Solovkiy but he was in solitary confinement in Moreplav where he had been accused of some sort of deadly Fascist sins, and it seems that there he got ten years more." There are no further traces of Adamovich. Even though young and strong it appears that he perished during the severe solitary confinement.

Among cultural workers, the majority of those driven out of Belorussia in 1930 and 1931 had formulated their political convictions already before the revolution. Many of them were authors of learned works. Mitrofan Dovnar-Zapol'skii, a professor of history had his first treatise published in 1891 in Kiev, Ocherki Istorii Krivichskoi i Dregovichskoi Zemel do kontsa XII stoletiia /Essays on the History of the Krivichi and the Dregovichi to the End of the Twelfth Century/; Litovskaia metrika /Lithuanian Metrics/, was published in St. Petersburg in 1903; Issledovaniia i stat'i /Research and Articles/, Vol. I, Etnografiia i sotsiologiia /Ethnography and Sociology/, Obychnoe pravo /Common Law/, Statistika /Statistics/, Belorusskaia pis'mennost' /Belorussian Literature/, in Kiev in 1900 Osnovy Belorusskoi gosudarstvennosti / The Foundations of the Belorussian State/ in Wilno in 1919 (in Belorussian). This short list of a part of Professor Dovnar-Zapol'skii's many works indicates the direction taken by his scholarly activities after 1891. By 1926 he had already been deported from Belorussia, and by 1930-1931 even his name had been completely eliminated from Belorussian writing ... (1)

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1. For information about Professor Dovnar-Zapol'skii note the article by one of his students, A. Sakovich, in Beda /Misery/ No.7(12), July, 1952, pages 193-206.

7: Krushinsky - 30 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

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Professor Picheta, the (relatively, of course) elderly rector of the University of Belorussia, has very many historical works to his credit. While Rector of the University /27/ he wrote Istoria Belorussii / A History of Belorussia/, Part I, Minsk, 1924, and Voprosy vysshei shkoly v Belorussii v proshlom /Problems of Higher Education in Belorussia in the Past/, both in Belorussian. Professor Picheta was arrested in 1930. When he was released from exile, by a lucky chance, he further published Osnovnye momenty istoricheskogo razvitiia Zapadnoi Ukrainy i Zapadnoi Belorussii /Significant Moments in the Historical Development of Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia/, Moscow, 1940, a book which, as one can boldly assert even without reading it, was written on order, expressly for the purpose of providing a theoretical basis for the Red Army's seizure of the western Ukraine and Belorussia. Nikolai Azbukin, a professor of geography at the University of Belorussia, was arrested and exiled to Nolinsk, (formerly) Vyatskaiya Guverniya, in 1930-1931. There is no further information about him . . . The academician, and philologist, Iazep Lesik, was arrested and banished in 1930-1931, and in 1936, while in prison during the Ezhovshchina, was tortured to death. Lesik in particular had to face all kinds of accusations after his arrest. The well-known brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising the "scholars" L. Bobrovich, Shpilevskii, V. Bondarenko, S. Vol'fson, and Ia. Mats'iukevich, wrote, "After the Red Army had driven the Polish Whites and the other White bandits from the B. N. R. /Belorussian National Republic/, from the territory of what is now Belorussia, a part of the former ministers, including Ia. Lesik, remained in Minsk. With the aid of Balinskii /sic! Is that Balitskii?/ and Nekrashevich, those two toadies of the French general, Bartel', who had come to Minsk from Odessa, they began their activities. When, as a result of the victory of the working class under the guidance of the Communist Party, there arose the idea of organizing a research center in the B. S. S. R. (The Institute of Belorussian Culture), the Nats-Dems at once went to considerable trouble to take over that center and use if for anti-proletarian purposes. They began to group themselves around the People's Commissariat of Public Education so as to get down to 'business' immediately. Having joined forces under Ignatovskii's wing in Narkompros, on January 27, 1921, they heard an appropriate speech by Nekrashevich, the same Nekrashevich who, as late as January 13, 1919, wrote a letter to the French general, Bartel', asking his aid in the liberation of the Belorussian 'motherland' from the barbarian Bolsheviks."

LCI (page 130) In another place the brigade writes, "Unfortunately the efforts of the Nats-Dems met with a significant amount of success. For example, Lesik and Lastovskii came quite close to liquidating 'tovarishch,' a word which is detested by reactionaries of all varieties. This word which is so saturated with revolutionary emotion was almost thrown out of the Belorussian language by the friendly efforts of the National-Democrats, and in full agreement with the Skarina tradition replaced by the patriarchally polite dziadz'ka (diadia /uncle/) . . . And responsible Soviet workers, frequently even Party men /28/ call each other dziadz'ka and tsetka (diadia and tetia /uncle and aunt/). Lesik in 1918-1920, conscious of his strength, ridiculed the word tovarishch in the White Guard newspapers, always putting it mockingly in quotation marks . . . When the Soviets came to power these people almost succeeded in driving the hated word out of use . . . " (Page 124).

The literary critic, Vladislav Charzhinskii (Derzhinskii), was arrested and exiled to Kazan'. His Vypiski iz Belorusskoi literatury XIX-XX Stoletii, /Selections from Belorussian Literature of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries/ Minsk, 1926, had served as a basic text for teachers of Belorussian literature.

Another group arrested, included the young writers, poets, university lecturers, and school teachers who had already shown promise of great ability and who had been educated to the realities of Soviet life. The overwhelming majority of them were from the lower classes, mostly from the peasantry. It was a gifted generation stoic and staunch. Adam Babareko, a lecturer in philology and a talented literary critic, was arrested the first time in 1930, exiled in 1931, and died in prison in 1937. He was born a peasant. The young and gifted poet, Vladimir Dubovka, was arrested for the first time in 1930 and deported in 1931. In 1934 he was transferred in exile to Chuvashia, and in 1937 he disappeared in the torture chambers of Ezhovshchina. Another talented poet, Aleksandr Dudar, was first exiled in 1929 to the Smolensk Oblast', arrested again in 1937 and tortured to death. Vasilii Shashalevich, a playwright, was first arrested in 1930. In 1936 he was again arrested and sent to Kolyma where he died.

It is apparent from this short list that these people were active workers and essential elements in the national cultural rebirth -- the teachers and mentors of the young cadres of nationalists. They all had solid scholarly backgrounds.

Characteristic of the 1930 and 1931 arrests was that very few of the prisoners were punished by exile. In those times there were not yet enough concentration camps with the result that those deported were allowed to live at liberty in a restricted area. However, this sort of banishment was noted for its gentleness. In order to make supervision more convenient, the G. P. U. usually concentrated them in the sparsely settled northern provinces where it was impossible for them to find work to earn their daily bread. If one considers that the majority of those exiled /29/ were intellectuals, often elderly and unfit for physical labor, and that no one needed their literary skills, then it is apparent that their situation was very difficult. They did not all have relatives who could help them consistently. Times were very hard in the thirties, famine was in the country and the population lived at a very meager level of sustenance --therefore a significant part of those exiled were doomed to a slow death by starvation.

During 1930 and 1931 the uppermost group of workers in the Belorussian national movement was eliminated when the G. P. U. had completed its work, there remained the task of justifying this sharp and unexpected change of policy by means of propaganda. The prisoners had not been granted trials; people just disappeared, to turn up later in Siberia, on the Solovetskiye Islands, on the White Sea Canal construction, or in exile. There were persistent rumors that the prisoners had been accused of organizing and participating in the "Union for the Rebirth of Belorussia" /the S. V. B. / or the "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" /the S. O. B. /. At the time, the G. P. U. press usually printed slanted selections from "testimonies" which had been wrung from the prisoners by force. In the form of a secret brochure, as completely secret material, a pamphlet was passed around for the enlightenment of highly placed Communists. Without indicating how the prisoners' testimonies were procured, Party newspapers, periodicals, and special "exposures" quoted extracts from them. Then the secretary of the Party Central Committee or a member of the Central Committee Bureau was likely to make use of them somewhere at a meeting of the Party 'aktiv'.

"Cleansing" after Arrests -- Elimination of "Nats-Dems"

Official propaganda was faced with the task of portraying the Belorussian national movement as the work of Belorussian nationalists

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meaning that it was synonomous with counter-revolutionary, wrecking activity and espionage -- aimed at tearing the B. S. S. R. away from the Soviet Union and creating a bourgeois national-democratic republic. Among those arrested were included the leading Belorussian intellectuals-- the brains of the national movement, its theoreticians and those who put theory into practice . . . Social origin was of course taken into account, and every method was utilized to discredit the prisoners. The national movement was contemptuously christened the "Natsdemovshchina," and all who had either partaken in the national work or sympathized with it were called "Nats-Dems." The Soviet press and orators at official and unofficial meetings and gatherings elaborated on these epithets with all possible variations. /30/ It is characteristic that representatives of other nationalities such as the Lithuanian Ambrazhunas, who was a well-known Soviet worker, and the Jewish writer, Plavnik, who was famous under the pseudonym of Zmitrok Biadulia, were implicated in the Belorussian national movement. In its exposures the brigade of the Marxist-Leninist Department of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences wrote, "Nor did Z. Biadulia lag behind; on the pages of Belorusskaia Shliakha, under a pert pseudonym, he wrote, "Our language -- is a sainted martyr which has stood up under various tortures and hostile attacks and, even though it has not emerged victorious, has survived to the present day." (pages 100-101) In another exposure Ideolgiia i metodologiia natsdemokratizma/ The Ideology and Methodology of National Democracy/, the director of the philosophical institute of the Academy of Sciences, the academician S. Ia. Vol'fson, wrote, "The Nats-Dems were guided in all their activities by the 'golden rule' that without God you don't get anywhere. Therefore poets began their books with psalms saying 'My whole being strives toward God -- the living Lord.' (Biadulia) . . . The being of the Nats-Dems unceasingly 'strove toward God'" (pages 39-40). These thoughts of Z. Biadulia date from 1918, and Academician Vol'fson resurrected them in 1930. By the way, Biadulia was saved from arrest; he died in 1941 (1) and his work entered the anthology of Belorussian poetry

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(1) Z. Biadulia died while leaving Minsk during the German attack in 1941; as a Jew he could not remain, and no one was concerned with Jewish evacuation. He died during those nightmarish days, while escaping through his own efforts.

661 published by the Leningrad Publishing House in 1948. On the orders of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gei, "brigades" were formed in the Academy of Sciences, and they meticulously searched through publications, mimeographed speeches, and addresses for elements of National-Democracy. The prose and poetry, as well as newspaper articles, of writers and poets suspected of "Natsdemovshchina" were subjected to careful scrutiny and inspection. Besides those who were arrested, other, so-called "unexposed" National-Democrats, were smoked out. The attacks were transformed into persecution, and as a result of this badgering the famous Belorussian poet, Ianka Kupala, became desperate and attempted to kill himself after the manner of the Japanese samurais. School texts were leafed through carefully, and most of them withdrawn from circulation -- especially reading chrestomathies, grammars, and collections of dictations. Some were withdrawn automatically upon the arrest of the author and independent of their content, while others were banned as being considered inappropriate to the era of collectivization in agriculture and the Five-Year Plans. In the reading 626 chrestomathies examples of private farmers either in small villages or isolated homesteads were not permitted. /31/ Nor were the arith- 872 metical problems ever taken from the life of an independent farmer. The teachers themselves had to make up problems using the kolkhoz life or cooperative trade as a base. Moreover, only high quality produce or well-fattened stock could appear in the problems. Similarly, with regard to cooperative trade, only examples which affirmed its superiority over private trade could be employed. Some teachers, especially in the provinces, who were not sufficiently experienced in the subtleties of this Soviet policy were not only fired from their jobs but even arrested for using the following sort of example in a dictation. "Three lean kolkhoz cows were grazing in a meadow." All these switches and changes unquestionably had their impact upon the quality of work done in the schools, but educational leaders were held less responsible for the absence of textbooks than for using ones which were "ideologically inconsistent."

Theater repertoires were also subjected to severe inspection.[1] 661 Everything even remotely reminiscent of Belorussian nationalism 536 disappeared from the stage, the artistic value of the play notwith- 626 standing. The First Belorussian Theater was forbidden to give Na Kupale, /On St. John's Eve/, a marvellous fairy-tale based on the national folk legend of the search for the "flower of luck" on the

[1] [After 1930, cf. pp. 32-33, category III - Analyst]

661 night of St. John Kupala. The same happened to the historical
536 drama Kastus' Kalinovskii which portrays the heroic struggle of
626 the Belorussians in 1863 under Kastus' Kalinovskii's leadership. It was not saved by the circumstance that Kalinovskii was hung in Wilno by Murav'ev, the man who subdued the rebellion. 'Masheka', a play based on the legend of the founding of Mogilev, was also taken off the stage.

They[2] even turned their attentions to the travel ing theater
661 which was under the direction of the national artist, Vladislav
545 Golubok. Instead of dramas based on the national life which could
626 thus be understood by the broad masses of peasants and workers, the theater was reduced to giving strange and unintelligible translations. The travel ing company's repertoires was taken under strict surveillance as were those of the national music and singing ensembles. The director of the subdivision of Narkompros devoted to art, Il'ia Gurskii, displayed particular watchfulness in this respect. He could discover "Natsdemovshchina" not only in plays but even in the players' costumes. The artists of the Belorussian National Ensemble of music and song usually appeared on the stage in folk costumes: white trousers and folk blouses embroidered with Belorussian motifs. Gurskii ordered the white trousers to be replaced by black ones and the blouses by another kind which by its style was closer to a jacket, only without Belorussian ornamentation. The busts of the national poets, Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos, were removed from the pedestal of the First Belorussian Theater. /32/

523 A manifestation of chauvinism was uncovered even in the
626 Jewish national work. Jewish cultural workers, especially those
536 from other parties -- Social-Democrats (Mensheviks), former
661 Zionists, Bundists, Poal'-Zionists /?/-- were taken under strict supervision. In the Jewish theater the play, Girsh Lekert, was enjoying a great success. It portrays the revolutionary struggle of the Jewish workers in Wilno in 1902. In the course of the play the main character, a worker named Girsh Lekert, makes an attempt on the life of the Governor-General of Wilno, von Wal'. This is a historical fact. In addition to this play, the memory of Girsh Lekert had also been commemorated by placing suitable inscriptions upon the pedestal of a monument to Tsar Alexander II, the bust was broken off after the revolution. In the search for manifestations of national chauvinism it was decided that Girsh Lekert belonged to

[2] [official propaganda which portrayed the Belorussian national movement as counter-revolutionary, cf. pp. 32-33, category 116 — Analyst]

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
626 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

(1) The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

186 was being devoted to the life and work of Doctor Skarina. Portraits
661 of him were printed in large quantities, and they decorated the halls of learned and cultural institutions, schools, museums, etc. There was a large plaster figure of him in the vestibule of the Institute of Belorussian Culture which in 1928 was transferred to the Academy of Sciences. After the proscription of National-Democracy the statue of the learned doctor of the sixteenth century was thrown out. Even the little statues of Skariny were destroyed, and a similar fate attended the portraits and statuettes of the other national hero, the leader of the Belorussian insurgents, K. Kalinovskii.

In order to compromise the National-Democrats and their
208 activities completely the new director of Narkompros* of the B. S. S. R., I. Gurskii, was ordered to have a play written with the appropriate content. Gurskii decided that he would write it himself and thus make his career. Not gifted with a dramaturgic abilities, he did not write a play but a worthless burlesque on people who had already seen the inside of G. P. U. cellars. Making use of his official position Gurskii compelled the First Theater to accept this talentless work for production. Enormous material resources were used in staging it, to the great detriment of the other theaters . . . However, neither material expenditures nor the director's efforts could help the play in the slightest. Gurskii portrayed the National-Democrats as drunkards and depraved elements. The attempt of the universally respected and talented poet, Ia. Kupala, to take his own life was depicted as the foolhardy escapade of a drunkard. After two or three performances, Gurskii's play, as obviously worthless, forced, and spurious, was withdrawn without any particular fuss, criticism, contrite admissions, or confessions of error on the part of the author . . . So the atempt to use the stage for persecuting the National-Democrats was for the present not crowned with success. From Soviet newspapers it has been ascertained that I.Gurskii recently "responded" with two plays on post-war kolkhoz life: Khleb /Bread / Svoi Liudi /One's Own People/. They met the same fate as his "response" of twenty-two years ago. /34/ They were panned by the critics and did not even get to the stage.

Simultaneously with the arrest of the National-Democrats
661 all of their writings were withdrawn from libraries, reading rooms, and general circulation, independently of whether or not they had any connection with the charges brought against the prisoners.

*[People's commissariat of Public Education-Analyst]

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661 Everything which had been created during long years of active research in history, ethnography, geography, literature, art, and regional studies; the productions of gifted poets both young and old; and the research work of specialists were all heaped together as harmful National-Democratic rubbish once their authors had been arrested. Every Soviet citizen, especially those who had any connection with a book, could consider himself a candidate for arrest. Every intellectual was particularly diligent to destroy in time any books, newspapers, photographs, or pictures of those who had been arrested in order to avoid extra unpleasantness in the case he might have the bad luck to be arrested himself. Usually arrest was accompanied by a thorough search with confiscation of all photographs, even of people long since dead or of those who had no connection with the arrested person; private correspondence was taken as well as books and documents of authors who had already been imprisoned. All this was later analyzed and sorted out by the G. P. U. in its search for accusatory material. In this fashion valuable books, photographs of friends and relatives possessing great sentimental value, and family correspondence perished and are perishing in flames. People preferred to burn everything suspicious so as not to give the G. P. U. investigators the opportunity to dig around in it with their filthy hands or to ridicule a person's most sacred feelings during cross-examination.

626 661 Here is a short list of those works destroyed which are of general significance: 1) anthologies of Belorussian national art, 2) dialectal dictionaries of the Cherven', Mozyr', and Vitebsk areas, 3) four-hundred year old Belorussian printed matter, 4) the Belorusskii Arkhiv (a periodical), 5) all anthologies of the poet, Ales' Garun (who died in emigration), 6) the publications of the first congress of Belorussian archeologists and archeographers, 7) the publications of the Department of Humanistic Sciences of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences (comprising philology, history, ethnography, archeology, art, law), 8) the series of editions of Belorussian scientific terms, 9) material for the study of Belorussian scientific terminology, 10) Belorussian folk-tales, proverbs, and sayings, written down and arranged by A. Serzhputovskii. This is only an insignificant part of the colossal vandalism.

Out of fear even Soviet books were no longer displayed or advertised in the bookstores . . . All the propaganda posters with Soviet decorations which had been hung in public places disappeared.

626 661 Some particularly timid institutional directors hastened to repaint their offices so as to cover the Belorussian ornamentation. /35/

It cannot be asserted that this "purge" of everything national in Belorussia, which so often led to absurdities, was carried out as a result ofspecial directives. It was just that the new leaders, particularly those who were above suspicion with regard to the national work, hastened to insure themselves against any unexpected troubles.

626 217 There was total havoc in the Belorussian State Museum. Everything was radically rearranged, there were changes in the plans of the work, and all the museum's activity was subjected to merciless criticism. The brigade of the Department of Marxist-Leninism of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, comprising L. Bobrovich, I. Shpilevskii, M. Grinblat, A. Levdanskii, in its "exposure" Etnografiia muzeinoe delo /Ethnography in the Museums/ wrote, "The National-Democrats chose ethnography as one of their basic objectives. Ethnography gives wide scope to the primary aims of the Nats-Dems . . . The ethnographic interest of the National-Democratic scholars was an adjunct to their politics." (page 151). The very purposes of museums were revised -- mass-cultural work among the broad masses of laborers was demanded from them, on socialist construction and class warfare. "First of all it is interesting to note how the Belorussian National-Democrats approach the role of a museum as such. The principle task of a museum is to collect, safeguard, and study objects of archeological, historical, ethnographic, and artistic interest which pertain to Belorussia (Kharlampovich-- Piatigodie Belorusskogo Gosudarstvennogo Muzeia /The Fifth Anniversary of the Belorussian State Museum"/ Nash Krai /Our Country/, No. 1, 1927, page 10). This is an old bourgeois proposition. Is a museum only a collection of interesting things? Is it only a curio cabinet? Is there not even any difference between a Soviet museum and the reactionary ones developed by students of local lore in the good old days?" (page 204), proclaimed the brigade of the Academy of Sciences. Museums were particularly blamed for not carrying on anti-religious activity but on the contrary collecting everything of value from the Catholic and Orthodox churches and the synogogues and preserving it lovingly. As a result of this reproof the museums changed completely. Everything reminiscent of the national essence of Belorussia vanished from the displays.

661 The Belorussian national movement was also charged with aiming to preserve religious feelings among the population and with

the desire to create its own Belorussian antonomous church. The national movement was also accused of wanting to preserve ancient church buildings, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish, at a time when their value as historical monuments was being denied. In this connection the remarks of the same investigating brigade of the Academy are characteristic: "One does not have to go far to discover the reasons for the attentive attitude toward the churches of the National-Democrat counter-revolutionaries, if the basic aims and intent of the latter are kept in mind. /36/ Belorussian National-Democrats -- the Nazalezhnik group -- who were dreaming of an independent national republic the whole time, never ceased in their efforts for an independent Belorussian autocephalous church. A bourgeois state cannot exist without a church. It is not accidental that the discussions about an autocephalous church which have been in vogue since the time of Nasha Niva /Our Cornfield/ have not stopped for a minute either among the Belorussian national-fascists on the other side of the border or among the counter-revolutionary National Democrats in the B. S. S. R. (page 226).

The well-organized movement for study of the region suffered particularly. Everything that had been accomplished through many long years was subjected to annihilating criticism, the movement now had to devote itself to promoting kolkhoz construction in the countryside; every effort at pure scholarship was declared counter-revolutionary and harmful to the country's socialist construction. R. Vydra in his exposure, Belorusskii natsdemokratizm v kraevodcheskom dvizhenii B. S. S. R. , /Belorussian National-Democracy in the Regional Study Movement of the U. S. S. R. / , writes this: "Belorussian Nats-Dems, who had almost completely taken over the regional studies movement in Soviet Belorussia, subordinated it to their own bourgeois-restorationist, counter-revolutionary, fascist aims, never hiding their historical connections with their own chauvinist-nationalists forebears of the Belorussian bourgeois camp. For this reason the historical essays on the study of Belorussia or the Belorussian countryside which appeared in Nash Krai /Our Country/ (1) are so very characteristic,

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1. Nash Krai /Our Country/ -- the organ of the Central Bureau of Regional Study. The principal articles of the National-Democrats appeared mainly in this magazine.

661 814 even though they conceal the roots of their so opportune study of Belorussia. The articles by Vasilevskii and Kasperovich in Nash Krai, /Our Country/ the historical essay in Kasperovich's book, Kraevedenie, vystupleniia na I i II Vsebelorusskikh s'ezdakh kraevedeniia, /Regional Studies: Speeches Made During the First and Second Congresses of Belorussian Regional Experts/ all this material unanimously and openly, without any sense of shame, established a connection between the ideas and organization of modern National-Democracy in the B. S. S. R. regional studies movement and the Belorussian bourgeois-democratic movement in pre-Revolutionary times" (pages 244 - 245). Kasperovich, Shliubskii, and others, the spiritual leaders of the regional studies movement, were dismissed from their posts and deported in 1931. Regional studies in the B. S. S. R. was headed by a small-minded careerist, Serafimov, and national-chauvinism was discovered not only in the magazine, Nash Krai /Our Country/, but even in its name. So it was renamed Sovetskii Krai /The Soviet Country/ a title which is loose enough to encompass the whole Soviet Union.

New Personalities /37/

661 Who replaced the arrested leaders of the Belorussian national movement? In place of the imprisoned People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, the former president of the Public Education Workers' Union, Anton Platun, was appointed. He had been director of the union for a very short period. Up until these new appointments he had been public prosecutor in Borisov for a while and then secretary of the Communist Party in the Slutsk district. In general he was considered only of average capacity. He had had neither training as a teacher nor even a secondary education, having progressed no further than one of the so-called higher grammar schools. In order to invest him with the authority befitting his appointment as People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R. Platun was given the title of academician. He had no learned works to his credit, and the only lectures he had given were harangues at Party meetings. When the campaign for rooting out the "Natsdemovshchina" began, Platun took a rather active part in the unmasking of the nationalistic inclinations of the poets Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos. While in Narkompros he displayed no particular initiative and did not even

disarrange the system established under Professor Ignatovskii although, of course, the arrests caused considerable alteration in the personnel of Narkompros. Under Platun there was a reform of the Belorussian institutions of higher education. The University and the Agricultural Academy were separated into two institutions. However this was not on Platun's initiative but the result of a directive from Moscow.

In the place of the deported Rector of the University, Professor Picheta, Ia. Korenevskii, a member of the collegium of Narkompros, was appointed. Ideologically he held views similar to those of the arrested Belorussians, and later on he also was fired and arrested.

As People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R. an employee of the agricultural cooperative, a man named Rechitskii, was appointed. Even though he was only semi-educated, he had had a little practical experience in Soviet work and was relatively reasonable and competent as far as peasant farming was concerned. In his practical work the People's Commissar of Agriculture /Narkomzem/ was completely immersed in promulgating the collectivization and fulfilling Party directives in regard to this question. He did not concern himself with exposing the activities of his businesslike predecessor and had no inclinations toward careerism. The working staff of this large commissariat was not totally obliterated, only a few of the leading workers, namely those who had been close assistants of Prishchepov, were arrested (including Smolich, and Godes who was the leading man on land reclamation, and Savich). Rechitskii was considered a climber from work on a lower level rather unfamiliar with the situation, and therefore less was demanded of him at first. /38/

The vacancy in the presidency of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences remained unfilled for a considerable time. There were no uncompromised persons who could have been selected for that eminent position. It was possible to turn people with elementary school education into academicians, but for the presidents some kind of "figure" was necessary. The Kremlin dispatched a certain Gorin to this post from Moscow. Although Belorussian by nationality and coming from western Belorussia, he would not speak the language and had changed his Belorussian name, Koliady, to the more euphonious Gorin. He considered his specialty to be history. Young, arrogant, and demanding, he regarded himself as an agent of Moscow whose task was to annihilate the National-Democratic Academy and organize a genuinely Communist one, subordinated to the interests of socialist construction. He demanded that all organizations cooperate with and assist him, often with the totally unjustified hints that, to be sure, the National-Democratic Academy had been supported and helped by everyone and he, Gorin, was not sure that such assistance was being extended to him also. In order to make him an authority in Belorussia he was ordered to go to Warsaw to a congress of historians. At the congress he made a speech -- how successful it was is difficult to judge. But it became known that some Polish learned society had invited Gorin to deliver a lecture on some other historical subject and that he had declined the honor-- it must be supposed for the simple reason that Moscow was not certain of Gorin's competance to handle the job independently. In about 1932 he wrote some articles in the magazine Bolshevik /The Bolshevik/, engaging in a controversy with Iaroslavskii about some subject which I have forgotten. After two or three articles the Bolshevik announced that the controversy was being terminated. Iaroslavskii's stand was accepted, but nothing was said to Gorin about the fallacies of his convictions. The result of such a discussion as this, published in the Communist Party's theoretical journal, the Bolshevik, was again regarded in Minsk as an attempt to invest Gorin with learned stature. In practice, in his dealings with the Academy of Sciences Gorin gave no indication of being anything except perhaps a creator of investigating brigades among academic workers whose purpose was to smash the "Nats-Dem Academy". In about 1935, Surta, who had previously been People's Commissar of Health in the B. S. S. R., became president of the Academy. He was also sent from Moscow. Gorin's eventual /39/ fate is unknown (1)

1. It is possible that his fate was connected with that of his teacher, the famous historican Pokrovskii, whom Gorin never forgot to mention in any of his "works". As is common knowledge, Pokrovskii was subjected to severe criticism up until his death in 1932, after he was decisively unthroned in 1930. (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1939 Edition, Volume VIII, pages 387-388).

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Tomasz Dombalj, a Pole, was sent as the first vice-president of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. He had visited Minsk for the first time in 1924 as a member of the Extraordinary Session of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R., when the Vitebsk and Mogilev Guberniyas were being united to Belorussia. Dombalj had been the first Communist representative in the Polish Sejm. For his "Communist activities" he was deprived of congressional immunity, arrested, and sentenced to ten years in prison. Warsaw exchanged him for a Catholic bishop who had been arrested by Moscow. It was supposed that Dombalj would head the Peasant International (2); evidently he worked in the Comintern until 1931.

> 2. The Peasant International -- officially the International Peasant Council-- was founded in 1923, headed at first by A. P. Smirnov, and after him by I. A. Teodorovich (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Volume IV, page 329, and 1930 Edition, Volume V, page 89. In the Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia. /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1937 Edition, Volume XXXV, page 17, at the word Krest. Intern. /Peasant International/ we find the reference, "Refer to Mezhdunarodnyi Krest'ianskii Soviet / International Peasant Council/, but in Volume XXXVIII, 1938 Edition, of the same encyclopedia, where all the words with the prefix 'mezhdunarodnyi' /international are found, there is no longer any Mezhdunarodnyi Krest'ianskii Sovet/ International Peasant Sovet/, from which the reference may be drawn that it foundered in the murky and troubled waters of the Ezhovshchina some time in 1937 or 1938.)

According to rumor he had been an officer in the Austro-Hungarian Army during the first World War; there were also rumors that he had attended courses at several universities. Distinguished, always gay, vivacious and sociable, a lover of good company, he did not resemble a scholar at all. He himself insisted that he was working on a large scientific undertaking --a description of the rivers of Belorussia. In the generally guarded Soviet atmosphere, collecting material on rivers and compiling an index with information as to their depth, width, speed of flow, and banks made Dombalj's activity rather prone to suspicion. During the construction of the new Academy of

661 Sciences building, he ordered a small house to be built for him not far from the Academy /40/ and slightly set apart from the bustle of the city. The style of its architecture was western, but, what is worse, beside it there was built a pigeoncote. In a free society these "inclinations" would not have aroused the slightest suspicion. It appears that Dombalj was arrested during the Ezhovshchina and paid in full for everything. It is particularly mystifying to note that the trial was held in Warsaw. Another worker who was with Dombalj in the affair maintained that he conducted himself throughout in a most revolutionary manner, organizing a hunger-strike while together with him in the same cell of the Warsaw jail. His learned study of Belorussian rivers was declared predestined for use by spies in the service of Poland, and the pigeoncote pronounced a post for carrier pigeons.

In connection with the destruction of the national movement changes were also instituted in the Soviet consulate in Warsaw. A. Ul'ianov, the son of a Minsk doctor, had been head of the Belorussian section of the consulate. His assistants were the Belorussians, Il'iuchenok and Brovkovich, who had been People's Commissar of Finances before being sent to the Warsaw consulate. At that time Ul'ianov had as yet not been subjected to any disciplinary measures, and later was appointed to the consulate in Latvia. Brovkovich was recalled from Warsaw, was director of the Belorussian State Publishing House for a very short time, was fired from this job, appointed director of a fishing concern sixty kilometers from Minsk, and then arrested. After his recall from Warsaw the consular employee Il'iuchenok was offered very second-rate work in the State Publishing House and was deported to the North in 1931. All traces of him have disappeared. In Minsk at the time there was a group of three persons which comprised the staff of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the U. S. S. R. in the B. S. S. R. The plenipotentiary's deputy, a young Communist and a graduate of the University of Belorussia, was also suspected of being a National-Democrat and arrested.

New Personalities in the Party /41/

665 In connection with the beginning of the destruction of the national movement there were even some changes in the

557 665 The moment was very appropriate. Stalin had settled accounts with the opposition and become the completely powerful leader. The theory and practice of leadership was picked up and quickly began to spread into the provinces. Even in the innermost rayons, the rural kolkhoz Party members shouted at meetings, "All hail to our leader so-and-so!" Any secretary of the local Party Committee could be considered such a leader. The "leader" accepted all this enthusiasm as his due. The leadership treatment and fawning before Gikalo were of course especially outrageous. Lentsner, as editor of Zvezda /The Star/, lauded Gikalo and spared no words or phrases. His portraits were published in large editions, and clubs, reading rooms, Party and Soviet institutions, schools, and empty shop windows were decorated with them in large quantities. Access to him became a great deal more difficult, and just to see him a special pass was necessary. He did not always receive even responsible Party functionaries. The following incident will attest just how cozy a nest had been feathered by means of 'kadership' and apple polishing. During a banquet, after a session of the Party plenum everyone was shouting, "All hail to our leader, Comrade Gikalo." However there was one member of the banquet who started to quarrel, evidently after considerable intake of alcohol, about the propriety of calling Gikalo a "leader". This incident was immediately brought to the attention of Secretary Sharangovich. The audacious individual was expelled from from the Party, but the affair stretched on for more than a year and finally came to the ears of Moscow. The guilty person was excused by the fact that of course there is only one leader -- Stalin, and although Gikalo is an excellent Party director still he is not a leader. The guilty man was reinstated in the Party, with a reprimand, however, for "quarreling without cause". At the time there were five Party secretaries in various fields of activity, all perpetually guarded by G. P. U. agents.

Purges 1933 and 1934

665 661 In 1933 there was a purge in the Party. Gikalo used it to get rid of certain elements which were troublesome to him and thus to strengthen his own position still further. To attain these ends he selected a commission with particular care. It was important to choose a president /48/ for the purge. In order to settle matters, once and for all with the national movement in Narkompros, the Academy of Sciences, the University, the State Publishing House,

665 the National Commissariat of Health /Narkomzdrava/, his wife, 661 Gikalo-Chizhova was appointed President of the purge in these institutions. She was reported to be a partisan from the Caucasus. When she first arrived in Belorussia she had occupied the post of director of the journalistic institute.

The purge was public; those involved had to recite their biographies and confess their sins. Entry was free to all, and not only was every accusatory speech permitted but even encouraged. There were cases of Communists, especially those who considered themselves old fighters with long records and who did not want to undergo these unpleasantnesses, turning in their Party cards themselves. At the opposite extreme, some farsighted people arranged to have their friends come to the meeting on the day of their particular purge and by their speeches attempt to portray them in the best possible light. Particular pressure was applied upon those who had been implicated in the national movement, Trotskyites, and those who had belonged to other parties. They were mercilessly expelled. Some time before the purge, various Party archives had been examined and G. P. U. reports which could serve as a basis for expulsion from the Party selected. In order to compromise directors of institutions who because of their good standing in the Party could not be summarily expelled, another method was employed. In such cases Gikalo usually issued a directive to expel without mercy all Communist fellow-workers of the one whom it was proposed to compromise. Having discredited the environment it was then easy to throw in the accusation that the director had been exposed to unhealthy influences. This is what was done to Sovnarkom President Goloded, the president of the Central Executive Committee, A. Cherniakov, and the People's Commissar of Public Health, Tsentsiper.

Arrests of Belorussian Nationalists - 1933

In 1933, there were some arrests of Belorussian intellectuals; 661 they were not exactly of a mass nature but were still significant. The victims in most cases were young Belorussians poets and writers, who were evidently regarded as a relapse from the mass arrests of 1930. This literary youth had given great promise and was burning with the desire to serve its nation. The second group of arrests was from among prominent Belorussian public figures, mainly those

•661 who had formerly been deputies to the Polish Sejm. Almost all of them belonged to the Western Belorussian organization called "The Belorussian Workers' and Peasants' Union" /Belorusskaia Krest'iansko-rabochaia Gromada /. In fact they were the leaders of this organization and its membership ran into the thousands. In 1905 the Belorussian delegates had been deprived of congressional immunity and arrested. In 1927 /49/ they were sentenced by the Polish judiciary to varying periods of imprisonment, but by an agreement with the Soviet Union they were handed over to the B. S. S. R. Here they were received with great pomp, meetings, orchestras, and newspaper accounts of their activities. Most of them received responsible posts. However, no confidence was manifested in them. They were not permitted to do their work independently, being generally appointed as deputies -- in Narkompros, the State Planning Commission, museums, the Academy of Sciences, etc. The first period of meetings and joyful hopes passed and was replaced by stern Soviet reality which the delegates had not even thought about. They lacked all the necessities of life, not to mention such customary comforts as sufficient furniture and roomy apartments. They confided their feelings to one another guardedly but mentioned their dissatisfaction even to the native Soviet population. Of course all this was taken in and recounted to the G. P. U. One further circumstance made them uneasy. The most influential of their number, Professor Bronislav Tarashkevich, for some reason or other never got to Minsk, and it was rumored that he had gone from Poland directly to Moscow. A Polish court had sentenced Professor Tarashkevich to thirteen years imprisonment. He was a prominent and renowned philologist, and while in the Polish jail had been elected a member of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In vain he was awaited in Minsk; he was not permitted to go there.

In Minsk in 1933 all the former Polish delegates were arrested, and likewise those Belorussians who had been condemmed by Polish courts for belonging to the Belorussian Gromada and deported to the B. S. S. R. Thus in one night a lot of credulous enthusiasts were liquidated. Certain dark rumors were current to the effect that the Polish Defensiva had rid itself of the leaders of the Belorussian masses in Western Belorussia while in the B. S. S. R. the G. P. U. was trying to liquidate the same top echelon of the western Belorussian national movement. In his memoires, one inmate of Solovki

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661 describes his meeting with the Belorussian delegates and other imprisoned Belorussians. They mentioned to him that they had spent about a year in prison in Minsk. In these memoires of the concentration camp on Solovki, a book entitled Nedostreliannye, / The Unexecuted - - literally means "The Not Completely Executed" - - Translator / on page three, Pidgainyi writes, These former sovereigns who had become the most obediant slaves, arrived at Solovki " in miserable and pitiable circumstances. " The best and bravest of all was Rak-Mikhailovskii. I know nothing about either his past or his activities in Soviet Belorussia. I can only assert one thing, that this person sincerely and without regret actually said, "We had it coming. " I had the opportunity to converse with Rak-Mikhailovskii several times, and received a most excellent impression ... /50/ He decisively and categorically condemned everything in which he had so blindly believed and blamed himself for what happened. At Solovki he worked at heavy physical labor, always and everywhere reiterating his hatred for Bolshevism and for Moscow, until at last in 1936 he was put in one of the isolation cells on Solovki. Metla on the other hand, who was tall and slender with blue-grey eyes, was a lyrically tender and quiet person. He was sick with tuberculosis, and coughed, but did work which was far beyond his physical strength. Already on Morsplav (sic), while he was planing beams in a woodworking shop, he threw down the plane and said, 'No, I just can't take it. If only the norms were lower! ' -- and could never fulfill them. On Solovki he had to dig ditches in some land-improvement project and finally landed in the hospital out of which they carried his corpse secretly. No one found out where Metla was buried. I received this sad news in the spring of 1936. " The Ukrainian, Pidgainyi, had the same sad but warm memories of the delegates, Dr. Dvorchanin and Gavrilik, whom he also met on Solovki.

These Belorussian figures were liquidated by People's Commissar of the N. K. V. D. . Zakovskii, a man noted for his cruelty, who had come to Belorussia from Siberia with a whole staff of trusties. After the murder of Kirov in Leningrad, Zakovskii was made the Leningrad Commissioner in place of Medved' who was given a ten-year sentence. When Ezhov's came to power in the N. K. V. D. , Zakovskii was appointed his deputy and subsequently shared the fate of his chief.

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661 A new Party purge took place after the killing of Kirov; it went under the innocent designation of a "certification of Party documents." This purge was not public and had as its slogan -- "Let's put Party affairs in order." Externally it looked as though the Party records and documents were being checked and collated. Accuracy was required in all files. However, in actuality, this was the most terrible purge of all. All Communists who had ever been penalized, those excluded from the Party in the past, ones suspected of nationalistic inclinations, Trotskyism, and those who had come from other parties, all those were under suspicion and had their Party cards taken away. Lists were drawn up of the ones selected, and their expulsion from the Party was legalized by a Central Committee decree. This work was handled by the so-called Commissioner of Party Control, who had taken the place of the Central Control Commission. In some institutions as many as fifty percent were ousted; everything was done behind the scenes, and it was rare that anyone appealed. However, in some isolated cases Gikalo called in the expellees for examination. In Minsk Professor Kaminskii, a man of seventy-five and a specialist on eye diseases, was expelled after an examination of his Party record /51/ on the grounds that before joining the Party he had been in the Bund and in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. To Gikalo's question as to why he had changed from one party to another he cleverly remarked that all his life he had been seeking the best party and at last had found it . . .

Eventually, of course, some of those expelled were reinstated by Moscow, but this took years. In Pravda there appeared articles about excessive zeal, a too formalistic attitude and too little sensitivity, which stated that some honorable people had been expelled.

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665 After the check-up of Party documents several commissars were recalled from Belorussia, even though they had not been expelled from the Party and had not suffered any Party penalities. The reasons were deep and secret. Those recalled from Belorussia were Belorussian by nationality. In the past they had not been mixed up in active national work, having on the contrary replaced the commissars who were fired and arrested in 1930. However, during their work they had not practiced indiscriminate defamation of everything national in Belorussia and in many cases quietly encouraged various manifestations of the national work. They had been embittered by the dictatorial tactics of Secretary Gikalo, and there were other motives as well. These commissars had joined forces around Sovnarkom president Goloded, Gikalo's strong and stubborn opponent. They never ceased to regard him as a possible candidate for the post of first party

557 165 been demoted . . . Sovnarkom President Goloded had become temporarily unassailable, and in Moscow he was above any sort of suspicion. As for Gikalo, to be changed from party director of a republic to second secretary of an oblast', even one with heavy industry, was considered a step down.

After an absence of more than a year in Kazakhstan, V. Sharangovich was sent by the Kremlin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. It looked as if the Belorussian Communists had attained their heart's desire -- as first secretary they got a Belorussian who for the third time was returning to work in Belorussia. The ensuing year brought with it many griveous changes.

Yezhovshchina - 1937

643 /this spelling occurs in the original, otherwise the transliteration used is "Ezhovshchina." Translator/

.661 In the middle of 1937, the president of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., Aleksandr Grigor'evich Cherviakov, committed suicide. A Belorussian by nationality and born in the village of Dukorka thirty-five kilometers from Minsk, he was a teacher by specialty, having graduated from the normal school in Wilno. In the First World War Cherviakov was an officer. The February Revolution found him in Petrograd where he subsequently organized the Belorussian soldiers of the Petrograd garrison. After the Bolshevik seizure of power Cherviakov entered the Communist Party. When on February 27, 1919 the so-called Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was organized on the territory of Lithuania and Belorussia, Cherviakov became Deputy Commissar of Public Education (1). From the day of /55/ the second announcement of the Belorussian S. S. R. up to his death Cherviakov was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee and then of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. He was not noted for his revolutionary activities. It is possible that in the

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1. Immediately before this Cherviakov was Commissar of Public Education in the first government of the B. S. S. R (cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsikopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1934 Edition, Vol. LXI, page 195/ (sic).

first years after the revolution Cherviakov was attracted by the idea of a national rebirth in Belorussia, and, like many other Belorussian intellectual, he hoped for a regeneration of the Soviet system and the creation of a Belorussian democratic republic. It was rumored that Cherviakov, during the Belorussian national movement of the NEP years, belonged to an underground organization of Belorussian nationalists (1). He understood the psychology of the national masses perfectly, especially that of the peasantry, and was a good speaker. In the first years of the Soviet regime, when possibilities were more numerous, Cherviakov did a lot of work. Of course he could not proclaim his own Belorussial laws, but anyone who was offended, hampered by his limited rights, or sentenced to a long term in prison or even death, found a possible source of assistance in the person of Cherviakov, that is, if assistance was still possible in any way at all. The peasantry, in particular, came streaming into his anteroom. His popularity was extraordinary. His official position permitted him frequent trips to the cities, towns, and villages of Belorussia. Not following the example of other Soviet leaders, he always tried to be with the masses, to see everything with his own eyes, to talk with the peasantry and the workers. Already as early as the thirties, every Soviet person, eminent ones in particular, had to be especially restrained, circumspect, and careful, not only in his actions, but in words, meetings with others, and conversations. As far back as the time of NEP, Cherviakov, while speaking at a meeting on a visit to Moscow, had been careless enough to repeat Bukharin's slogan, "Get Rich!" Subsequently this carelessness caused Cherviakov a lot of difficulties. Every climber and careerist, during the collectivization and afterwards, took every opportunity, whether or not it had any relation to the business at hand, to remind Cherviakov of this "cardinal sin." Bukharin was accused by using this slogan, of inciting to individual rather than to the collective prosperity which was to be realized through the kolkhoz and nationalized state industry. Cherviakov's enemies were always trying to pin a right deviation on him. However, /56/ none of the attempts to overthrow Cherviakov, especially those made by

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1. These rumors, more probably, were disseminated by the G. P. U. and are scarcely consonant with reality.

Secretary Gikalo, met with success. The Kremlin directed that he should remain as President of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. In his personal life he was very unassuming and not fond of any sort of pomp and circumstance. During a Party plenum in the conference room of the government building Cherviakov left the meeting, went into his office, locked the door, and shot himseld in the heart - with a revolver. When the door was forced open he was already dead. On the day after his suicide this little notice in small type appeared on the last pages of the Minsk newspapers: "Yesterday, due to family misunderstandings, A. Cherviakov, the President of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., shot himself." His corpse was displayed in the club of the labor union of soviet and commercial employees. On the day of the funeral a simple, rough, wooden, not even painted coffin was set on the platform of a truck, without any wreaths or the funeral ribbons with inscriptions which are usual in such cases and born off to the tomb without any funeral music. Nonetheless Cherviakov's funeral turned into a large, crowded, but silent demonstration of the population of Minsk. An enormous crowd accompanied the coffin; policemen on foot and horseback drove away the multitudes of people and ordered them to disperse, saying, "Well, you've seen the funeral, now move on." During the funeral procession, because of the massive gatherings of people, every sort of movement through the streets came to a halt. During the funeral itself there were no speeches or memorials. He was buried but not forgotten. For more than a year Cherviakov's tomb was always decorated with newly-cut flowers which his friends and well-wishers brought. His wife and two foster-daughters left Minsk after the funeral and were arrested later on. After his death Cherviakov left the most happy memories among Belorussians.

Osip Stakun was appointed president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. in his place. He appeared in Belorussia in about 1934 or 1935. We have no information where and in what capacity he had previously worked. It is known that Stakun had long been a member of the Communist Party, which he had joined even before the February Revolution, while a foreman in the Putilov Works in Leningrad. By his habits and bearing Stakun reminded one of the old Party intellectual-idealists, who payed little attention to their personal lives. He was pleasant with others and displayed no sharpness on the job. Coming from the Wilno province and

643 Belorussian by nationality he showed no interest in the Belorussian national work, even though at the time it was very muffled and suppressed. Upon his appointment as president of the Supreme Soviet the general opinion was /57/ that he would, to some extent, take the place of the intelligent and sensitive Cherviakov. However Stakun lasted no longer than three or four months as president, after which he was arrested. His fate is unknown. Then a certain Natalevich was appointed president. No one at all knew him; there were rumors that he had been a captain in the Red Army, but he certainly was never a member of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.. Nothing was known of his past. He lasted until the war, and apparently even during the war was still considered president since he remained at the post afterwards. What has happened to him recently is matter for conjecture since now there is another president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R.

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661 After Cherviakov's suicide the next prominent victim of the Ezhovshchina was the president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R., Nikolai Goloded. He was not arrested when the secretary of the Party Central Committee announced to him that he was being recalled from his post. In his place another secretary was recommended, a certain Volkovich. Goloded was arrested either in Moscow or along the way. It became known subsequently that during the examination by the N. K. V. D. he threw himself from the fifth floor and killed himself. There are grounds for supposing that the N. K. V. D. purposely made his death look like suicide. We have already spoken about his career several times (cf. pages 43, 45, 51). He was president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. for almost ten years, taking the place of Adamovich who was recalled from Belorussia and shot himself during the Ezhovshchina. Goloded had an excellent memory as well as great ability as a director and administrator. He had barely finished the first three classes of the workers' school of the Agricultural Academy. However his natural abilities made it possible for him to cope with his responsible Soviet post. On the job he was secretive and conceited, and was able to bring others under his influence. He was not on familiar terms with anyone, and was always reserved. In Moscow he was able and skillful at promoting the cause of the Belorussian economy. He was on good terms with Molotov, Mikoian, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. However, all this did not save him from death.

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665 661 Even Party Secretary Sharangovich's turn came up at last. After a short time as first secretary of the Party he was arrested. His fate is known from the Moscow newspapers. Sharangovich was tried along with the group headed by Bukharin. The trial was public, and portions of it were printed in the papers. It seems that all the defendents were sentenced to death, including Sharangovich. The impression he made was that of a sincere and hearty man. As was previously noted he had gained /58/ the confidence of many Belorussian Communists, especially young ones. However, in the light of subsequent events his activities in Belorussia give indications of secretiveness and lack of sincerity toward those who trusted him. No Belorussian got decorated for partisan activities during the Soviet-Polish War, yet Sharangovich was decorated ten years later. And in any case nothing had been heard of his guerilla activity at the time. It is common knowledge that there was no unified command over the partisans in 1919 and 1920, and if Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement, the actual participants themselves only learned about it afterwards. His change in allegiance after he received the decoration and became Gikalo's obedient tool left a bad taste in the mouths of many Communists. His term as first secretary was marked by the deaths of president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. A. Cherviakov, and of president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. N. Goloded. Even if Sharangovich was not primarily responsible for their deaths, nonetheless he was very close to the whole affair. In the last stage of his life, at the trial of the Bukharin group, after Bukharin had testified, Sharangovich made some remark as this: "Bukharin, why tell lies here in court?" Even in a Soviet court Sharangovich tried to gain some advantage for himself.

665 Instead of the defunct Sharangovich the Kremlin sent one Volkov as Belorussian first secretary. All of his "activity" took place at the height of the Ezhovshchina. Volkov did not concern himself with leadership but was mainly an adjunct of the N. K. V. D., and "honorary" office which he filled with particular pleasure and satisfaction. A lot has been said and written about the N. K. V. D.'s activities during that period.

665 661 By nature Volkov, the new secretary of the Party Central Committee, was a crude despot with the manners such as chekists had during the first years of the Soviet system. Uncultured and

unbridled in his expressions, he produced a repellent impression. He spent his time making speeches at various meetings during which he fumed against "the enemies of the people." Right and left he ascribed various kinds of crimes, particularly espionage and wrecking, to various victims. After such a characterization the agents of the N. K. V. D. had nothing left to do except collect the victims and cart them off to the cellars. It is appropriate to hear the story of a certain Prokopchuk who was a professor of dermatology. At a meeting of workers in medicine Volkov made a speech accusing the professor of having spread veneral diseases among his patients for the purpose of sabotage. By the way, from the Soviet point of view, Professor Prokopchuk's political reliability was suspect least of all. /59/ In the past he had been a partisan in the Soviet-Polish War; after graduating from a medical institute he applied to become a specialist, and as a reliable man and a Communist he was ordered to Paris to perfect himself in his specialty. After this accusation Volkov did not allow Prokopchuk the chance to speak in his own defense.

Volkov sent his henchmen into the country districts, and they operated in exactly the same fashion. These envoys of Volkov, so-called Central Committee instructors, upon arrival in some particular rayon, would convoke a Party meeting and right there, having accused the contemplated victim of espionage and sabotage, would take away his Party card. The N. K. V. D. would then finish the job. One particular instance of this sort became widely known. About six kilometers from Minsk there is a rayon center, the town Cherven' (formerly Igumen). A certain Plentnev was Party secretary in this rayon -- an average director and not outstanding at all. Formerly he had been the village schoolmaster. At a Party meeting, Volkovs' deputy took his Party card away and accused him of espionage. Able to foresee the course events would take, Pletnev, who was sick and very nervous and did not want to have to wait for these unpleasant developments, decided to commit suicide. He shot himself in the temble, but did not succeed to kill himself. The severely wounded Pletnev was arrested by the N. K. V. D. and put in the prisoners' ward of a hospital. He lived, but the shot had severed his ocular nerve, and he was left blind in both eyes. After a lengthy arrest he was set free. The Ezhovshchina passed; here and there, timidly and without any special publicity, new "enemies

of the people" were beginning to be uncovered--those who had been arrested inhumanly and using such refined forms or derision in carrying on the investigations into non-existant crimes. The Central Committee instructor who had been directly responsible for Pletnev's blindness was remembered, and a public trial was organized in Minsk as a warning example. By the magnitude of the offense and the way events were developing, most people thought that the accused would be threatened with the death penalty. However he got off with five years imprisonment. One wonders if he survived his sentence in the concentration camps.

As a display some saboteurs were tried publicly in Gomel' during the Ezhovshchina. Those implicated were the president of the Gomel' City Soviet (his name escapes me), the director of the City Health Department -- a certain Gurlo, and the head of the repair shops for tractors and farm machinery whose name was Valiukevich. All three were Communists. They were accused of unbelievable crimes, and they admitted them not only in the N.K.V.D. cellars but also in court -- something which made a very deep impression upon the masses of workers present at the trial. By the way, before the revolution Gurlo had /60/ worked at the very insignificant job of town postman; he attached himself to the Bolsheviks in the very first days of their power, and later, after a number of years, became director in the large telegraph and post offices. Gurlo, like the other two who were accused was absolutely not inclined to become a wrecker. However, he "admitted" that through a group of agents he had infected small children with syphilis while they were still in the nursing homes. All three were condemned to be shot. Gurlo's agents, of course, perished at the same time before the eyes of the public, without a trial. Tall N.K.V.D. operatives took them in custody and carried them away in the "black raven." Then there were persistent and highly probable rumors to the effect that they had been promised life and liberty for "confessing."

There was another case. A forty-year-old woman named Novikov was arrested in Gomes'. She was a Party member, half-educated, whose work was organizing women on the kolkozes. She was confronted with a charge of spying for Germany, based on the fact that during the first World War she had earned her bread by washing the German soldiers' laundry. The charge was

665 absurd, and the victim would not confess to the investigator. So he began to try to assure her that her "confession" was needed by the
661 Party. In her simplicity Novikov stated quite reasonably that he, the investigator, was also a member of the Party and if the Party needed someone to admit to a charge of espionage, here he was presented with the opportunity. By a lucky chance Novikov succeeded in being released; a good friend of hers who was acquainted with an influential N.K.V.D. agent helped her. Novikov herself used to tell about this.

They arrested one member of the Komsomol, He was assigned the role of having spied for Italy. Knowing himself to be absolutely innocent, he stubbornly refused to confess. The investigator beat him terribly, put him in a cell, put him on the assembly line -- the fellow was unable to stand up under these methods and was ready to confess. The other prisoners in the cell took pity on the innocent youth, but of course they were unable to assist him. The Komsomel member, by the way, was a student in a school of design. There was one sharp-witted person in the cell, and he taught the Komsomol member how to "confess." At the regular examination he confessed that his contacts during his espionage activities had been the Italians Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and others. The investigator was overjoyed by the admission, having gotten what he wanted and complied with the wishes of his "superior." He fed the Komsomol member, gave him some makhorka, and sent him back to the cell. There he sat for about two more weeks, thanking his preceptor for the successful method of confession. /61/ He was called in again for examination. The elder investigator swore at him for turning the investigation into a farce, but the young man explained that his teachers had certainly been famous Italians. The ignoramus investigator had not had a notion who these world-renowned men were and believed that Raphael was an organizer of spy rings.

626 During the Ezhovshchina the Belorussian Communist press played an especially repulsive role. The so-called newspaper
661 correspondents scoured the various Soviet agencies and institutions for accusatory material. In this work assistance was given by the directors of the secret departments of commissariats and other important establishments. These departments were called "special sections," and in most cases were under the supervision of the secretaries of the Communist cells. When some sort of evidence, no matter

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626 how flimsy, had been collected, the newspaper, and particularly
611 the Communist Party organ, Zyezda would concoct an accusatory article in which no colors were spared in inventing ways to vilify the appointed victim. The facts were distorted and in most cases hollow, false, and obviously invented. At best anything positive was passed over in silence or it was presented as counter-revolutionary activity, as the intrigues of enemies of the people... After such a preparation the victim would disappear on the same day into the cellars of the N. K V. V. The existing prisons were not sufficient to hold all the prisoners, and old cellars and half-ruined storehouses had to be used; in Minsk, for example, a former monastery was adapted to serve this need. Arfests were made not only by the N. K. V. D., but also by the organs of the Soviet militia, under the pretence that it was for statutory offenses, and afterwards they were handed over according to special categories.

611 Citizen S. was arrested just because of this sort of accusatory and lying newspaper article in Zyezda. The police arrested him on some made-up statutory offense. While he was in police custody his wife with great difficulty succeeded in getting a chance to see him during his walk. He had not been accused of anything and had not even been examined. After three months he was handed over to the N. D. V. D. All attempts by his wife to ascertain his subsequent fate were unsuccessful. A year and a half after his arrest an N. K. V. D. agent appeared with a letter from her husband. He would not give her the letter but read it aloud instead. She maintained that the letter really looked as though written and signed by her husband. In it he begged her to send him a little fat and some warm clothing. The letter was taken back; his wife, however, was reassured by the agent who had told her that her husband's conduct was good and that he would be released within a month. The poor woman collected everything she had to make up a package /62/ to send the prisoner a little fat and some dried crusts. They took the package, and the woman sat up every night until morning waiting for her husband's return since there were rumors that prisoners were released from prison only after midnight. Eventually on one of these nights they came and carried off the woman herself, confiscating all her property and placing the apartment at the disposal of the N. K. V. D. Two homeless children remained, one twelve years old and the other four or five.

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564 The family of a prisoner[1] was in a difficult and terrifying
. 661 position. Often they had no means of subsistance, and in matters of earning a living they were considered enemies of the people. Members of such a family were not accepted for work, and those who already had jobs were dismissed on some pretext if not simply driven out into the street. The children of a prisoner suffered real tragedy as their situation was quite hopeless. They were refused admittance into middle and upper schools, and in the general schools they were expelled from all student organizations. The family of an "enemy of the people" was beyond the pale of the already limited Soviet legality. Neighbors and acquaintances kept away in such cases and refused to organize the members of the family. Everyone knew full well that there was no helping another's grief, and it was possible to draw suspicion upon oneself by having dealings with an enemy of the people. Such hard-hearted behavior should not be attributed to indignation and enmity toward the fate of relatives of an arrested man, but rather to an attempt to remain apart from it all or to escape the fate of the unlucky ones.

661 All the Belorussian commissars, their deputies, and many of the directors of trusts and other institutions were arrested. Others were appointed in their places and they themselves were frequently arrested in a very short time.

As an example the changes in the People's Commissariat of Public Education can be cited. After Platun's recall from the commissariat, D. Chernushevich was appointed in his place. Before being arrested he was dismissed from his job on charges of National-Democracy. He remained at liberty for two months and made efforts to get out of Belorussia to Rostov on the Don. This attempt failed. He was arrested after another month, and after a short while his wife suffered the same fate.

For a few months the Central-Committee functionary, D'iakov, an uncultured and half-educated person, was Commissar of Public Education. He was also arrested and Voronchenko appointed in his place. An engineer by specialty, young, energetic, and a Communist since Komsomol days he did not last long either but was quickly arrested. /63/ Uralova was the first one to stay at the job, being Narkompros during the war and still in that position not long ago. According to newspaper reports Uralova has now

[1] [i.e. one arrested for political deviation - Analyst]

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in the apartments at the sound of an automobile in the street. Every family expected the dreaded visitors. Often in one family several persons were arrested. Fellow-workers in the various institutions, coming to work in the morning, looked around uneasily to determine the number of victims of the previous night. A person had to make superhuman efforts to maintain his outward calm and self-control at his work. He had to appear indifferent to the arrests of his close friends or people sharing his views. It was dangerous to show any interest in the prisoners or to ask about the fate of their families. The nerves of some who were still at liberty could not stand the strain. They did not lie down and go to sleep but got dressed and wandered aimlessly through the deserted streets of the city until morning. There was nothing to justify this behavior, but in the street one somehow felt more composed, and it was better than to wait for death in your own apartment. A person comforted himself with the fact that he would usually learn somewhat earlier if any fatal blow was being prepared for him. Many tried to be sent to distant, and if possible isolated, places. Anyone who could, tried to go to another oblast', another kray, far from any settled regions. There were cases of voluntary requests to be transferred to work in the Arctic Circle, Yakutiya, or the polar regions, of persons who signed contracts to work there -- in the hope of being saved from arrest. However these measures seldom were of any avail. Foresighted people would prepare a small parcel with laundry and some necessary articles in case they were to be arrested. The terror was heightened by rumors of the nightmarish conditions under which the prisoners were kept, tortures during the examinations, forced confessions. The prison cells were filled to overflowing; prisoners slept in shifts, all lying on one side so as to take up less room that way, and after a certain time, at a command, all turning over to lie on the other side.

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Before being deposited in the cell, prisoners[1] were subjected to the most minute search; all watches, glasses, aids, bandages which sick people might have, and shoe laces were taken away; buttons were cut off trousers, jackets, overcoats, and buckles were taken off shoes. Particular care was taken to make sure that the prisoners did not keep anything metallic. Being deprived of glasses and bandages was, for those who were sick, a cause not only of discomfort /65/ but of pain. The former provincial and district prisons were altered during the Ezhovshchina.

[1] [Political prisoners of the 1936-1937 purge - analyst]

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697 Windows were reduced in size by the three quarters and filled with
661 bricks, wooden shields being set in some, to make it impossible to see
the jail yard or the side of the street or to see the outside world in
general. In the yards of the prison special cages were constructed
for the prisoners' walks, surrounded by a high board fence without a
roof, into which they let prisoners. Special small cells were made,
completely without windows, and the number of rooms of confinement
of all kinds was increased. The prison shops were made over
into cells for holding prisoners. The prisons were transformed into
places for keeping people who were under investigation. Those convicted
were sent to distant concentration camps. Rooms were kept
strictly isolated one from another, but nonetheless news was not only
quickly disseminated throughout the prison but even penetrated beyond
the walls.

When the terror slackened a very insignificant part of the
661 prisoners was set free. However, almost every one of them had been
ruined in health; teeth had been knocked out, ribs broken, ear drums
shattered, rectums injured from being forced to sit on the sharp
point of a stool or chair leg. But the principal sickness was spiritual
emptiness, and for many, bitter disillusionment, dejection, apathy.
Those liberated who were not Party members returned to their former
places of work, if they had not already been replaced by others. For
this "forced" absence they were not reimbursed, even though Soviet
labor law makes provisions for the individual's wages to be paid him
by his employer if through no fault of his own he is unable to work.
Many had been forced to sign an attestation that they would not divulge
what they had seen and heard in the N. K. V. D., and this paralyzed
any demand that their legal rights be protected which had
665 been mercilessly violated. Unenviable also was the lot of Party
661 members who were set at liberty.[1] They had to go through even
more trouble to be reinstated in the Party. The very fact of arrest
made the Party member an expellee. No doubt many of them would
have been glad to remain outside the Party, but a person who had
been expelled and made no effort at reinstatement was automatically
put in an incomparably worse situation than that of any non-Party
person. Leaders adopted a rather guarded attitude toward those who
had been liberated from arrest. They were a source of fear and danger
in the event of one of the possible twists of the Communist
Party's unforeseeable and changeable policy.

[1] [After having been arrested during the 1936-1937 political purge — Analyst]

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Ezhovshchina -- Summary /66/

661 The Ezhovshchina did away with nearly all the senior members of the Communist Party, and of all those with pre-October 665 standing there remained, apparently, only a few isolated individuals. All those who had been partisans in the Soviet-Polish War were annihilated; before the Ezhovshchina they had been considered a bulwark of all Communist measures in the outlying districts, especially in the ones on the Polish-Soviet border, and not a single political campaign could be promulgated without their active participation. Nor did those Communists escape who in their time had been sent to do underground work in Western Belorussia; they were accused of being Polish spies. Those who had been taken prisoner by the Germans during the first World War were also included, as they had seen the outside, even though their memories of it were far from pleasant since most of them had lived through a famine there. All Party members without exception who had, to any degree and no matter how remotely, been contaminated with Trotskyism or some other kind of opposition, were arrested.

The remnants of the Belorussian intelligentsia were arrested. 661 This now included people who had not participated actively in anything but who, by their outward characteristics, could have been supposed capable of independent thought: teachers, agronomists, engineers, planners and others. Almost none of the Belorussian poets and writers escaped. All who had served terms of imprisonment after being arrested in 1930 were arrested a second time during the Ezhovshchina and underwent a more severe form of punishment. In addition to the fact that the same Belorussian national workers who in 1930 had been condemned for National-Democracy were this time accused of Fascism, they also received a sentence of more years in concentration camps or were shot. A part of those arrested and condemned in 1930 was brought to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk. By means of examinations and visual confrontations they were used as witnesses for the indictments of those more recently arrested, and they, through the testimonies of these same newly arrested prisoners they themselves either had their sentences increased or were executed. Some prominent Belorussian figures who escaped were the satiricist, Kondrat Krapiva, and the former president of the Union of Belorussian writers, the Communist M. Klinkovich who out of fear of arrest cut

661 his throat with a razor but was saved from dying. Possibly it was just this which saved him from arrest. Others who were not arrested were Z. Biadulia and the budding writers, Brovko and Glebko. /67/

After the Ezhovshchina

After the Ezhovshchina accounts were settled with those 625 whose function it had been to execute the will of the organizers of 661 the terror. However, this took place within the walls of the N. D. V. D. In Vitebsk a certain Grechkin who had been arrested and subsequently set free was summoned to the (N. K. V. D.) court to serve as a witness in a case involving the inadmissibility of torture during examination. The investigator had knocked out several of Grechkin's teeth and was found guilty, but Grechkin was compelled to sign a statement that he would not divulge any information about what had transpired. The document, I Accuse the Kremlin of the Genocide of My Nation, by Nikolai Abramchik, published in 1950 in Toronto, Canada, in English, will provide sufficient testimony to the deeds of the N. K. V. D. in Belorussia during the Ezhovshchina.

665 The secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, 661 Volkov, was recalled from Belorussia after the Ezhovshchina and sent off to work in Mordovskaia oblast'. What became of him subsequently is not known, but the Belorussians will not forget this black figure who himself played such a very vital part in the slaughter ot tens of thousands of people. His cruelty was exceptional. P. Ponomarenko, who formerly had been a political agent in the Red Army in the Far East, was appointed first secretary. A new direction could be sensed in the Party's work, and this was particularly noticeable where the national movement was concerned. Formerly, national characteristics had been taken into account in various elections, appointments, and recruitments, but after the arrival of Ponomarenko the national problem ceased to exist officially. 661 The whole group of the former leaders had been destroyed.[1] 643 Natalevich -- a man little known to the Belorussian masses, lacking in authority and initiative, and obedient to the will of the secretary of the Central Committee -- settled down into the presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. To the post of Secretary of the Supreme Soviet -- who in fact was the deputy president -- a completely unknown worker from around Mogilev 661 was appointed. A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally

[1] [During the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

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661 645 A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally unacquainted with the agricultural situation in Belorussian and ~~its~~ people, was made President of the Sovnarkom.[1] Before the war, Kiselev was recalled to Moscow and appointed third deputy of the People's Commissariat of Public Health of the R. S. F. S. R.

661 After the Ezhovshchina all the higher echelons, including the Supreme Soviet, the Sovnarkom, the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the Academy of Sciences, and others took measures to efface from the national memory those figures who had become victims of the terror. Whenever it was necessary to apply some legislative act the correctness of which was not open to question, the signatures of anyone already dead or in a concentration camp were carefully concealed. Every allusion to the decoration of individual figures or institutions, such as the theaters, was destroyed /38/ as having been the work of enemies of the people. Under Ponomarenko the long established Belorussian tradition of appointing a Belorussian as second secretary of the Party was stopped. On Ponomarenko's request Moscow sent its own men out to Belorussia as commissars, directors of Central Committee subdivisions, and secretaries. Not following the example of former Party secretaries, Ponomarenko did not try to make himself popular by attending political meetings or other kinds of gatherings. Organizational work was handled by the other Party secretaries and directors of subdivisions. Ponomarenko loved displaying himself as a patron of the arts. He devoted a lot of attention to organizing various types of 'dekada', even in Moscow. He could be seen at theater premieres and at the Belorussian opera. He was also a sports enthusiast and visited the football matches at the stadiums.

Western Belorussia and Wilno in Soviet Hands

661 177 In 1939 the Red Army forcibly united Soviet Belorussia with its western portion.

A territory including a hundred new rayons was added. It had completely different attitudes toward the forms of state life, and, as might have been expected, a tremendous propaganda campaign on the ideal value of the form and content of Soviet power was initiated in the new rayons with all institutions being reorganized on the Soviet model. Soviet Belorussia alone, however, could not quite cope with this new territory, and workers were sent out from the central oblast's of the R. S. F. S. R.. Their selection was not invariably successful --

[1] [After the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

177 661 everything grew more and more disorganized just when the situation demanded the strictest order. I must admit that the Belorussian grass-roots population in general, and also the working intelligentsia, did not fear the arrival of the Soviets. Many, especially the poorest of the peasantry, expected free land--while the workers looked forward to the elimination of unemployment. The intelligentsia placed its hopes upon being allowed to acquire learning in its native language without being forced to become Polish or Catholic and upon seeing the Belorussian youth freely admitted into high schools and universities. In truth there was much in the first days after the arrival of the Soviet power that was hard for the Belorussians to understand. For instance, the mass purchase by the Soviets of all food products, shoes, manufactured articles and all the other things which the stores had in abundance--while at the same time the population heard every day, at meetings and on the radio, about the happy and plentiful life in the Soviet Union. Food for thought was also provided by the impoverished appearence of the Soviet employees, even the higher ones, who were coming to western Belorussia to work or on missions. Nor was it easy to understand why the former boundary, together with special passes, /69/ was preserved, and why the local population could not get permission to visit relatives on the other side. The newly created Soviet institutions worked far from smoothly. The population was also badly surprised when an unexpected decree annulled all former Polish money with hardly any exchange for Soviet money and when hard-earned savings as well as other kinds of money was confiscated in banks and savings institutions. This measure put all pensionaries and the whole working population in a very difficult position. There were some instances of landlords and other wealthy persons being murdered as a result of the incitement by propagandists. Those guilty of such killings were never brought to justice for the simple reason that Ponomarenko himself, in a constructive speech to those responsible workers who were just arriving, let it be understood that it was not worth their trouble to attach any importance to such blood vengeance since they testified to the "national anger" of the masses.

Simultaneously there were unceasing arrests throughout all of western Belorussia. The prisons were overflowing with Polish officials and government employees, with peasants who in some function or another had been attached to Polish institutions, with volost' foremen /starshina/, village elders, and policemen. Old Russian emigrants were also arrested, as well as Belorussian soldiers from the Polish Army who had escaped German imprisonment, any of the masses of those who were caught attempting to get into the central zone of Poland which was still under German occupation, members of the local clergy and any well-to-do elements. All who were under severe suspicion were dispatched to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk, and the rest--to concentration camps in Siberia. The conditions of imprisonment were repellent, and the methods employed during examinations were worse even than those of the despised Polished Defensiva. Belorussians openly admitted to the examiners that the Poles had been Polonizing them for twenty years without success, but that with the arrival of the Soviets, Polonization had been accomplished within a few months. This was the general tenor. In addition to the general arrests there were also individual ones, meaning that various segments of the population were liquidated. The first victims were the so-called Polish settlers, that is, the Polish colonizers who were the bulwark of the Polish state in western Belorussia. They were former members of the Polish army who had been allotted private homesteads with twenty to fifty hectares of land on preferential terms as well as being granted preferential /agricultural/ credits. The Orthodox Belorussian population was not even granted the right to buy land from these landlords. However, together with their families they were now shipped off to the east. One winter night all the employees of the forest service were sent off in the same direction /70/ starting with the forest wardens, who had been partly appointed by the Soviets themselves, and extending even to professors of forestry. It was supposed that there were a lot of Polish Army weapons hidden in the woods and that the forest service knew about them; this was the reason for their deportation to Siberia. The families of Polish Army soldiers were likewise arrested and deported. 661 177

A few words about the transfer of the city of Wilno to the still semi-independent Lithuania. This transfer was accomplished at the end of 1939. Wilno is a rich trading city which was forcibly seized by the Polish general, Zhelikhovskii, and then included within the Polish state. When the Red Army occupied Wilno, the general opinion was that it would be included in Soviet Belorussia. However, the plan for seizing the Baltic area had already matured, and negotiations concerning an agreement to quarter Red Army soldiers on Baltic territory were imminent. In order that the Lithuanians should have a good opinion concerning the Soviet intentions toward them it was 000

only in Minsk but even in Moscow, and they also got to Moscow by 177
way of western Ukraine. They were considered very useful since 557
they did not consume a lot of scarce gasoline.

As a matter of fact Soviet people could not understand the 563
national antagonisms existing in former Poland. In Soviet Belorussia 661
marriages between Belorussians and Jews were a common occurrence, but there, in western Belorussia, it was considered almost impossible and in any case an occurrence quite out of the ordinary. Some Soviet people were also surprised by the extreme subservience of the local population, particularly the peasantry, before government representatives and city people in general. This was the result of
the training given by the Polish regime. Nonetheless a very short 661
period of Soviet rule was sufficient to disappoint the population[1]-
the new government caused all wares to disappear in the stores; there were queues for every possible trifle; Soviet currency was almost valueless; all acts committed by local people in the past, even of the most innocent nature, were ferreted out and brought to light if they had any relation with the Soviet government which had not existed on that territory at the time. A broad net of N. K. V. D. informers was spread out everywhere; all peace and quiet was shattered by arrests and the frequent occurrence of unexpected and senseless searches. Universal fear and suspicion soon became entrenched on the occupied territory. The local population, particularly the prosperous upper level and the intelligentsia, was very scornful in its relations with Soviet people, no matter who they were, although this feeling was hidden.

At this point it would be possible to terminate our description 625
of Soviet reality on the eve of the Second World War. Only a few words 661
more need to be said concerning the activity of the N. K. V. D. in this comparatively quiet period. It did not stop its arrests. People were always being snatched away, some because of the testimonies of prisoners arrested during the Exhovshchina, others for listening to foreign radio broadcasts. There was a purge among the workers and employees who had been brought to Minsk from Wilno together with a dismantled radio factory. /72/ Those in whose dossiers there was the slightest, most absurd, evidence from the agents were given particularly careful checkups as well as those who had already served some sentence in a concentration camp.

[1] [in western Belorussia, annexed to Soviet Belorussia in 1939. Cf cat. 116, pp. 76-79 - Analyst]

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Appendix I /75/

A list of Belorussians arrested and deported in 1930-1931
for implication in the National-Democratic movement

1. Adamovich, Aleksandr (Ales')	Commissar of Agriculture Prishchepov's Deputy; deported to Solovki in 1931.
2. Azbukin, Nikolai	A professor at the University of Belorussia; deported in 1931 to Nolinsk, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya.
3. Anikhovskii, Aleksandr	Deported in 1931 to Slobodskoy, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya, and subsequently transferred to a concentration camp.
4. Apatsenak, Fedor	Deported to the north in 1931.
5. Afanas'ev.	A professor; arrested in 1930.
6. Babareko, Adam	Assistant professor and critic; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931; died in prison in 1937.
7. Balitskii, Anton	Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R.; arrested in 1930; deported to Solovki in 1931.
8. Vashchina, Konstantin (Lukash Kaliucha)	Writer; deported in 1931 to Irbit; transferred in 1936 to a concentration camp and shot.
9. Boikov, Nikolai	Assistant Professor of Philology; arrested in 1930.
10. Boiko, Ivan	Agronomist; arrested in 1930; shot in 1933.
11. Burdzeika	Agronomist; deported to the north in 1931.
12. Bel'kevich, Ivan	Philologist; deported in 1931. /76/
13. Golovinskii, Aleksandr	Engineer; deported in 1931.
14. Goretskii, Maksim	Writer, critic, literary historian; arrested in 1930 and deported to Vyatka (afterwards named Kirov); arrested again in 1937; disappeared

		in the torture chamber of the Ezhovshchina.
15.	Goretskii, Gabriil	Academician; deported in 1931; arrested again in 1936; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
16.	Gromyko, Mikhail	Poet and geologist; deported in 1931 to Ivanovo-Voznesensk.
17.	Gurskii, Mikhail	Artist; deported in 1931 to Malmyzh, (formerly) Vyatskya guberniya.
18.	Dovgialo	Professor and archeologist; deported in 1931.
19.	Druzhchits, Vasilii	Historian; deported to the north in 1931.
20.	Dubinskii, Sergei	Archeologist; arrested in 1930; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
21.	Dubovka, Vladimir	Poet; deported in 1931; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Exhovshchina.
22.	Dudar, Aleksandr	Arrested in 1929 and again in 1937; died.
23.	Dyla, IAzep	Historian; arrested in 1930 and 1931; deported to the north.
24.	Zharskii, Platon	Philologist; arrested in 1930.
25.	Zhilka, Vladimir	Poet; arrested in 1931; died in exile in Urshum, (formerly) Vyatskaya guberniya, in 1933.
26.	Zabela	Assistant Professor of History, arrested in 1930; deported to the north; died /77/
27.	Ignatovskii, Vsevolod	Professor and President of the Academy of Sciences; shot himself in 1931.
28.	Il'iuchenok	Deported in 1931 to Solovki.
29.	Kondrat'ev	Arrested in 1930
30.	Karavaichik, Pavel (Liubetskii)	Literary critic and medical doctor; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931.
31.	Korenevskii, IAzep	Rector of the University, arrested in the thirties.
32.	Kasperovich, Nikolai	Ethnologist; arrested in 1930; deported to the north in 1931.

33.	Katerinich	Teacher; deported in 1931.
34.	Kirkevich, M.	Agronomist; arrested in 1930; died in exile in the north.
35.	Kokhanovich, M.	Arrested in 1930; deported.
36.	Krasinskii, Nikolai	Professor of Philology; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931 to Poshekhonsk in the north.
37.	Kraskovskii, Ivan	Professor and historian; deported in 1931.
38.	Krinitsa, Anton (Anton Zhdanovich)	Artist; deported.
39.	Kuptsevich, Feliks	Critic; arrested in 1930; arrested again in 1933 and deported to Minusinsk in Siberia.
40.	Lastovskii, Vatslav	Academician; arrested in 1930; deported to Saratov in 1931; imprisoned again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
41.	Lesik, IAzep	Philologist; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931; died in prison in 1936. /78/
42.	Listopad, IUrii	Teacher; found guilty in 1926; arrested again in the thirties and deported.
43.	Liazhnevich, Aleksandr	Playwright; deported to the north in 1931.
44.	Mamchits, Nikolai	Teacher, Narkompros inspector, assistant professor; deported to the north in 1931.
45.	Maruk, Ivan	Public figure; deported in 1931.
46.	Mitskevich, Adam	Assistant Professor of Physics; deported in 1931 to Vyatskiy kray (to the town of Malmyzh).
47.	Meleshka, Sergei	Assitant Professor of History; deported to the north in 1931.
48.	Mukha, Ivan	Teacher and assistant professor; deported to the north in the thirties.
49.	Nekrashevich, Stepan	Vice-President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences; deported to the north in 1931.

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50.	Rodzevich, Cheslav	Engineer; deported to the north in 1931.
51.	Savich	Deported in the thirties for being a National-Democrat.
52.	Sereda, Ivan	Professor and veterinarian; deported to Yaroslavl' in 1931.
53.	Skandrakov	Professor of Agronomy; deported to the north in 1931.
54.	Smolich, Arkadii	Professor and academician; arrested in 1930 and deported to the north in 1931.
55.	Sushinskii	Assistant Professor of Chemistry; deported to Astrakhan' in 1931.
56.	Trampovich, Pavel	Doctor; deported to the north in 1931. /79/
57.	Ulashchik, Nikolai	A young historian, he was as a National-Democrat deported in 1931 to Nolinsk and from there transferred to a concentration camp.
58.	Ulitsyn	Assistant professor; arrested and shot in the thirties.
59.	Funk, Aleksandr (pseudonym A. Garodnia)	Critic; arrested in 1930; deported in 1931.
60.	Kharlampovich	Professor of Archeology; deported to the north in 1931.
61.	Tsvikevich, Aleksandr	Political figure; arrested in 1930; deported to the Urals /Priural'e/ in 1931; arrested again in 1937; disappeared in the torture chambers of the Ezhovshchina.
62.	Charzhinskii (Derzhinskii), Vladislav	Critic; deported to Kazan' in 1931.
63.	Chernushevich, Nikifor	Assistant Professor of Chemistry and poet; deported to Vyatka in 1931.
64.	Shashalevich, Vasilii	Playwright; arrested in 1930 and again in 1936; deported to Kolyma.
65.	Shchekotikhin, Nikolai	Professor of Art; deported to Vyatskiy Kray in 1931..
66.	Shliubskii, Ol'gerd	Archeologist; deported to the north in 1931.
67.	IAroshchuk, Nikolai	Agronomist; deported to Astrakhan' in 1931.

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This list includes by no means all of those who where punished, in fact scarcely more than one fifth of all those implicated.

/80/ Appendix II

A list of those arrested in 1933 and later, for furthering the national work in Belorussia

1.	Astapenka, Dimitrii	A poet: arrested in 1933; deported; arrested and deported again in 1936.
2.	Boiko, IAnka (Ivan)	Assistant Professor of Agronomy; arrested a second time in 1933.
3.	Vecher, Aleksandr	A poet; arrested in 1933; there are no traces of what became of him.
4.	Gavruk, IUrka (IUrii)	A poet; fiction writer, and translator; arrested in 1933; no traces.
5.	Nikonovich, Nikolai	Writer; deported to the Urals in 1933.
6.	Pribytkovskii, Vladimir	Poet; arrested in 1933; no traces.
7.	Rogacheskii, Petr	Author; deported to Siberia in 1933.
8.	Rodzevich, Leonard	Writer and public figure; arrested in the thirties; no traces.
9.	Sologub, Aleksandr	Poet; arrested in 1933 and shot.
10.	Taubin, IUlii	Poet; arrested in 1933; deported for the second time in 1936.
11.	Khotylev, Petr	Writer and critic; arrested in 1936 and deported.
12.	Chernushevich, Nikolai (pseudonum: M. Khvebarovich)	Poet; deported in 1937.
13.	Shalai, Makar	Critic; went out of his mind in prison during the Ezhovshchina.
14.	Shashaevich, Andrei (pseudonum: Myri Andrei)	Satirical writer and also prominent in the regional studies movement; arrested in 1933; no traces.

/81/ Belorussians who came from Poland

1.	Baran, S.	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; condemned by a Polish court and

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		deported to the B. S. S. R. where he was arrested in 1933; without a trace.
2.	Bursevich, Mikhail	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; arrested in 1933 and sent to Solovki.
3.	Volozhin, P.	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
4.	Volynets, Flegont	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
5.	Gavrilik, Iosif	Ambassador of the Polish Sejm; deported to Solovki.
6.	Dvorchanin, Ignat	Doctor of Philology; same fate as the others.
7.	Metla, Petr	Condemned by a Polish court to thirteen years in the B. S. S. R. ; arrested in 1933 and deported to Solovki where he died.
8.	Rak-Mikhailovskii	Condemned by a Polish court to thirteen years; arrested in 1933 and deported to Solovki.
9.	Tarashkevich, Bronislav	Professor of Philology; while in Poland sentenced to thirteen years; deported to Moscow; arrested in 1936; no traces.

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inhabitants against 40·8 per cent Byelorussians and 7·3 per cent Great 162
Russians. In Vitebsk, the second largest town, there were 45 per cent 369
Jews, 30 per cent Byelorussians and 20 per cent Great Russians. Gomel, the third largest, had 40 per cent Jews, 29 per cent Great Russians and 22 per cent Byelorussians, and Mogilev 52·5 per cent Byelorussians and 39 per cent Jews.

The insignificance of Byelorussian industry and the absence of any Byelorussian town life worth mentioning explains to a great extent the difficulties which the Soviet régime experienced both on the political and on the cultural front in the Byelorussian S.S.R.

For a long time the communist leadership was unable to convince the 517
more outstanding representatives of the Byelorussian people that class 186
struggle had to be conducted in Byelorussia just as anywhere else in the [illegible]
Soviet Union. The leading Byelorussian intellectuals, who had close ties with the destitute peasant masses of their people, proclaimed the so-called *Bezburzhuaznost* (the non-existence of a bourgeoisie) of the Byelorussian nation. At the same time the Byelorussian nationalists or *Natsdemy* (National Democrats), as they were officially nicknamed, were profoundly pro-Western and anti-Russian in their outlook. They [100]
did not even like to be described as 'Byelorussians' or 'White Russians' since these terms simply degraded them, in their view, into a species of 'Russians'. They advocated in the twenties that the Byelorussians should be called *Krivichi*, thus identifying themselves with a Slav people inhabiting the territory of Byelorussia 1,000 years ago. The central Government opposed this suggestion. The Byelorussians had to keep the name which already externally associated them with the Great Russians. Nevertheless, the Byelorussian intelligentsia persisted in cultivating an ideology which maintained that no close relationship existed between the Byelorussians and Great Russians and that the former did not belong to the Eastern Slavs owing to their different origin, history and the character of their culture.[31] This Western orientation of the Byelorussian [92]
intelligentsia also had repercussions in the field of linguistics and led to the attempt to create a Byelorussian scientific terminology different from the Russian.

During the twenties, the communist régime did comparatively little [517]
against the nationalist tendencies in Byelorussia. In the absence of any 186
communists capable of making a contribution to Byelorussian cultural 661●
life, the régime was forced during a certain time to leave the artistic and scientific activities of the nation in the hands of 'bourgeois nationalists'. Only towards the end of the twenties did the régime start purging the various cultural institutions of the country, and it was only in 1933 that the persecution of Byelorussian nationalism assumed major proportions. The year 1933 saw the discovery of the 'Byelorussian National Centre' which was charged with aiming at the establishment of a 'Byelorussian

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661 Democratic Republic'. The 'Centre' was reported to receive its intruc-
186 tions from Vilna and to recruit its membership from among 'remnants of Kulaks, White Guards and counter-revolutionary nationalists'.

665 According to the then First Party Secretary of Byelorussia, Gikalo,
186 the party was forced to fight not only against an outside organization but also against nationalist agents in its own ranks. These nationalist agents, said Gikalo, had penetrated into the party in the early thirties and had apparently succeeded in occupying a large number of positions in the local government machinery. As in the Ukraine, the offensive against the nationalists inside the Communist Party was launched on the express orders of the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party. [171] The All-Union Central Committee intervened in Minsk not only to secure the purity of communist principles in Byelorussia but also to protect in that republic the interests of Russian culture and the Russian language.

Moscow's intervention was precipitated by what became known as the 'Stsepuro Affaire'. A teacher with the name of Stsepuro had written a letter in Russian to a Byelorussian village council. Stsepuro's action led to a nationalistic outcry in which the local communist organizations and Soviet officials sided against the teacher, who in their view, ought to have written in Byelorussian. The matter was taken up by the Moscow newspaper *Pravda* and finally prompted the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party to draw attention to the 'distortion of Soviet nationalities policy' in Byelorussia. The statement of the Central Committee said that any ban against the Russian language and any persecution of persons using Russian were offences 'profitable only to the class enemy'. The Central Committee of the Byelorussian communists drew the necessary conclusions from the rebuke of the Moscow leaders and at a plenary meeting in December, 1933, proclaimed Byelorussian nationalism as the 'main danger'.[32]

Moscow had thus won the first round in the struggle against the local nationalist forces in Byelorussia. The second part of the fight reached its [661] climax in the summer of 1937 when all prominent Byelorussian communists were charged with conducting a nationalist policy. They included Alexander Grigoryevich Chervyakov, President of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic who committed suicide, the Prime Minister, Nikolai Matveyevich Goloded and the First Party Secretary and arch-purger of 1933–34, Gikalo. Both Goloded and Gikalo were executed. The main charge directed against them was that 'they had tried to tear away the Byelorussian people from the socialist culture of the Great Russian people'. The men around Chervyakov, asserted an official publication, 'were determined to oust the Russian language from the schools, to do away with Russian revolutionary plays, with Russian belletristic literature and works of music. They thus made it difficult for

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively 563 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the 563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main 647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very [484] difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no 665 557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

557 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers
665 were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was
not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the
fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often
had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers,
and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant
668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made
use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out
their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state
apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for
their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful
vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the
peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority,
occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable
impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy
President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary
qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal
life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the
vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and
factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal
565 influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia,
living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had
no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without
renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The
Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf. p. 19, Cat. 116--Analyst]

661 kept in operation through private donations. Belorussian students
553 could not enter the higher schools. The national social organization "Belorusskaia Gramada," which had 120,000 members, was closed and its leaders tried and imprisoned. The Orthodox clergy had to use Polish to preach in the churches and to teach the Law of God in the schools. The population of western Belorussia knew that in the B. S. S. R. a state was being built, that /17/ the official language was Belorussian, that a Belorussian Academy of Sciences, a State University, and other institutions of higher learning were in existence and that admission to them did not present any particular difficulties--on the contrary there were the so-called workers' high schools which prepared those who lacked secondary education for admission into the universities. National theaters were in operation, and literature
661 and poetry flourished. The Soviet press, which penetrated into western
166 Belorussia, as well as the radio and underground Communist organizations intensified their propaganda about the work in the B. S. S. R.. The Soviet Consulate in Warsaw, by using the Deputy Consul Ul'ianov who was himself from a Minsk family, generously supplied dollars to finance anti-Polish propaganda, the pro-Communist press, and various organizations in western Belorussia. As a result of this, hundreds of young people streamed across the border into the B. S. S. R., illegally and at great risk and danger to themselves, in the hopes of getting into the bright lecture halls of the University of Belorussia. The intelligentsia also crossed the border to find work and to find some scope for their abilities. How much bitter disillusionment there was after 1930, how much inconsolable grief and sorrow for their unfulfilled hopes and broken young lives. Led by their enthusiasm, they trustingly dashed into the perfidious and deceiving Soviet flame. Who could have supposed then that this great constructive work would be pitilessly crushed and that thousands of Belorussians would perish in the cellars of the N. K. V. D. or in concentration camps.

First Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Community Party of Belorussia

665 Up to 1930 there were several first secretaries of the Communist Party of Belorussia. All of them were envoys of the Kremlin, in fact plenipotentiaries of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union--guardians, preservers and exponents of the general line of the

Politburo. Thus it was already determined that the first secretaries of the Communist Party were always sent to Belorussia and were never Belorussians. Each of these envoys had a greater or lesser effect upon the course of the national work. There were no Belorussian Communists with pre-revolutionary records as most of them had not entered the Party before 1920.

The First Secretary of the Party from 1921 to 1924 was the Pole, Waclaw Bogutskii (1). In those times large scale national work had not progressed further than a gathering of forces and appraisal of the situation. Bogutskii had no special influence of the lives of the Belorussian people. His activity consisted mainly of speeches at meetings and assemblies, and as an orator of that type he was not bad. After a short period Bogutskii /18/ was replaced by Asatkin (Viadimirskii) (1) who was Russian by nationality. He did not prove anything special. Under him the Vitebsk and Mogilevsk Guberniyas were joined to the B. S. S. R., and after a short while Asatkin was recalled to Moscow. After him came Krinitskii, also Russian. He carried on his Party work for almost three years (1924-1927) (2).

By nature Krinitskii was a careerist--showing little independence in his work and always orienting himself by the Kremlin. At that time Belorussian influence predominated in the Party, and Krinitskii was alone. To further their own interests the Belorussians made use of the Kremlin's slogan concerning the building of a national culture that was "national in form and socialist in content." Krinitskii could not obstruct the national work--what was important to him was somehow to keep an eye on it to make sure that the culture preserved a socialist content. Krinitskii had no authority

1. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia, 1927, Vol. VI, p. 623.

1. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia /Small Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. IV, p. 364.

2. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia/ Small Soviet Encylopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. IV, p. 364.

665 among the Party rank-and-file. He was recalled to Moscow to the agitation and propaganda section of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. After his removal to Moscow he quickly forgot about the work in Belorussia. While director of the agitation and propaganda section in the Kremlin, Krinitskii at one conference sharply rebuked the president of Belorussia who was making a speech in Belorussian since he had not fully mastered Russian. Krinitskii reproved him, recommending that he speak in Russian.

After Krinitskii, in 1928, the First Secretary was the Latvian, Knorin. His activity left a definite mark, the more so since the Kremlin twice sent him to Belorussia as secretary. Knorin got acquainted with the leaders of the national movement and understood the strivings of the Belorussians for national rebirth, aided in the national work, and supported the initiative of the Belorussians. After he left, in 1928, Jan Gamarnik (1) an Austrian by nationality /19/ became First Secretary. Correct and tactful, a good orator and organizer, he did not introduce any changes in the national work. Gamarnik did not become intimate with anyone, especially in Belorussia. His activity did not last long--first appointed Director of the Political Administration of the Belorussian Military District he was then transferred to the post of Director of the Political Administration of the Red Army. In about 1928 or 1929 the Kremlin sent the Estonian, Gei, as secretary to Belorussia.

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186 In a comparatively short period the national work in Belorussia had carved a broad path for itself. The rebirth of a national culture was an indisputable fact; cadres of youth had been trained and posted all throughout the state apparatus. The region was healing itself of the wounds inflicted by wars and occupations; it appeared that the Communism of the war years had gone, never to return. There was some thought of conquering new positions since the national work and all its measures had found unquestioning support among the broad masses of the Belorussian people... The Party leadership,

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1. The Large Soviet Encyclopedia states that in his youth Gamarnik lived in Kiev. In Minsk he was considered a Czech. As we know, Gamarnik was subsequently shot together with Tukhachevskii. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia, /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/ 1929 Edition, Vol. XIV, p. 456.

665 sent by the Politburo in the persons of the first secretaries, in the 186 majority of cases adopted a strictly formal attitude toward the national work. It is possible that only Knorin really understood the situation. Secretary Krinitskii learned Belorussian and occasionally made speeches in it, but even so it was only to produce a good impression on the Kremlin and in order to assist his Party career in this way, that he did it.

The First Victims

Up to 1930, there had only been one trial aimed directly at a 161 nationalist. In 1926, Iu. Listopad, a non-Party teacher of Belorussian in the high schools, was arrested in Slutsk. He was tried in Minsk for organizing some sort of plot against the Soviet Authority. The trial was open to the public, and there were lawyers for both the presecution and defense. The students gave Listopad stormy ovations, and flowers were even brought to him during the trial. However the whole affair was cleverly and insidiously organized. The judges were members of the Belorussian intelligentsia and the Public Prosecutor, a well-known nationalist writer, D. Zhilunovich. /20/ It was all so well arranged that even Listopad's warmest supporters were forced to judge and condemn him. He was sentenced to five years in a reformatory--as the prisons were still called at that time. The shadows continued to thicken even after Listopad's trial had been forgotten. The twilight of the NEP was coming, and by the end of 1928 the cities were beginning to feel the shortage of agricultural products. In the Ukraine and other grain producing areas the Soviet regime was beginning to organize the first Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), the forerunners of the collectivization which was soon to sweep over the peasantry.

In the beginning of 1931, Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii, an academician and the leader of the Belorussian nationalists, fell a victim of the B. P. U. He had been called in for interrogation and afterwards shot himself in his own apartment. (1)

> 1. The suicide of Professor Ignatovskii was the last, as well as the most decisive act in the particular "case" of the S. V. B. * with which the G. P. U. had intended to connect him. The "case" was closed, and all those implicated were sent into exile in administrative functions--only the Communists Balitskii, Prishchepov, Al. Adamovich, and Il'iuchenos /sic/ were sent to concentration camps.

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* Belorussian abbreviation, Cf. p. 6 meaning:Union for the liberation of Belorussia.

661 pitilessly everything that had been created as a labor of love during the NEP. New people were needed, and Prishchepov was classed as an enemy of the people, a wrecker, middleman, protector of the kulaks, and a promulgator of the private homesteads and small villages which were so harmful to the socialist forms of agriculture. In official documents and propaganda his work was contemptuously called the "prishchepovshchina." However, the besmirched activities of Prishchepov the People's Commissar of Agriculture, left a happy and lasting memory among the Belorussian peasantry.

The death of the academician, Professor Ignatovskii, and the arrest of D. Prishchepov were not isolated instances. Almost simultaneously a large group of culturally and economically prominent figures were arrested, among them the very popular philologist and academician Ia. Lesik, the renowned Belorussian geographer and economist, Academician Smolich, the Secretary of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, Academician V. Lastovskii, Picheta, who was rector of the University, and others.

665 625 There were changes in the attitude and approach of the G. P. U. This organization received a standing order which was not to be changed for the arrest of Party members. As late as 1930, the G. P. U. had quite openly not meddled in the internal affairs of the Communist Party as the Party itself held court over its unsubmissive members and administered punishment. It had its own controlling and punitive organs in the Central Control Commission which had its plenipotentiaries throughout the republics and oblasts. . . . /22/

Anton Balitskii and the "Odessa" Group (1)

1. For information on the "Odessites" see the article by A. Sakovich, "Belorussi v Odesse" /"Belorussians in Odessa" Beda, /Misery/ No. 5 (10), May, 1952.

661 The People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, was also a victim of the G. P. U. Until 1928 he was a deputy in the Narkomat, but even then he actually directed all its activities. Professor V. Ignatovskii had many other responsibilities besides the Narkomat of Public Education. He devoted a lot of attention to the Institute of Belorussian Culture and gave lectures at the University and in the Agricultural Institute; literary and scientific work also took up a lot of his time. He had written several studies of

563 the Bund Party, and from this the conclusion was drawn that the
626 Jewish chauvinists were idealizing a chauvinistic party and its
536 members. This was enough to have the play immediately removed
661 from the stage. It was also necessary to destroy the inscriptions on
665 the monument (1). The Bolsheviks cannot bear the popularity of any other Party or its members, even though such popularity actually might be in accordance with historical reality. In this connection still another example is characteristic. The State Publishing House issued a series of biographies in the series called Zhizn' Zamechatel'nykh Liudei. /Lives of Outstanding People/. One of the books was about the life and activity of the famous volunteer Zheliabov. The book had been in circulation for quite a long time when criticism of it appeared in the Soviet press, as a result of which the book was withdrawn. The reason given was that the person of Zheliabov as a national worker was idealized -- this in spite of the fact that Lenin, even though not agreeing with the Narodnovolets tactics, called the movement a "heroic epoch". The real reason lies in the fact that Zheliabov admitted individual terror and advocated personal selflessness which are both very appealing to youth. /33/ The Bolshevik program repudiates individual terror, even though surreptitiously they practice it very widely. They are afraid to infect Soviet youth with the Narodnovolets' ideas about selflessness and thus turn it against themselves.

186 The Belorussians were always very proud of their great an-
661 cestor -- the scholar from Polotsk, a Doctor of Philosophy, and the first man in Belrussia to have a book published -- F. Skarina. In 1512, this great man received the degree of Doctor in medicine at the University of Padua. In one of the museum halls of the University there is even now a full-length portrait of Doctor Skarina among the other University celebrites. Until 1930 a lot of work and research

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1. The monument to Girsh Lekert was placed on the site of the one to Alexander II in Minsk in 1922 (cf. Malaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia) /Little Soviet Encyclopedia/ Vol.IV, 1929 Edition, page 554, and also 1937 Edition, Vol. VI, page 139) and "liquidated" during the Ezhovshchina. Such was also the fate of one of the Minsk streets which in 1922 had been renamed Lekert Street and during the Ezhovshchina was re-renamed Voyoshilov Street.

661 Sciences building, he ordered a small house to be built for him not far from the Academy /40/ and slightly set apart from the bustle of the city. The style of its architecture was western, but, what is worse, beside it there was built a pigeoncote. In a free society these "inclinations" would not have aroused the slightest suspicion. It appears that Dombalj was arrested during the Ezhovshchina and paid in full for everything. It is particularly mystifying to note that the trial was held in Warsaw. Another worker who was with Dombalj in the affair maintained that he conducted himself throughout in a most revolutionary manner, organizing a hunger-strike while together with him in the same cell of the Warsaw jail. His learned study of Belorussian rivers was declared predestined for use by spies in the service of Poland, and the pigeoncote pronounced a post for carrier pigeons.

In connection with the destruction of the national movement changes were also instituted in the Soviet consulate in Warsaw. A. Ul'ianov, the son of a Minsk doctor, had been head of the Belorussian section of the consulate. His assistants were the Belorussians, Il'iuchenok and Brovkovich, who had been People's Commissar of Finances before being sent to the Warsaw consulate. At that time Ul'ianov had as yet not been subjected to any disciplinary measures, and later was appointed to the consulate in Latvia. Brovkovich was recalled from Warsaw, was director of the Belorussian State Publishing House for a very short time, was fired from this job, appointed director of a fishing concern sixty kilometers from Minsk, and then arrested. After his recall from Warsaw the consular employee Il'iuchenok was offered very second-rate work in the State Publishing House and was deported to the North in 1931. All traces of him have disappeared. In Minsk at the time there was a group of three persons which comprised the staff of the Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the U. S. S. R. in the B. S. S. R. The plenipotentiary's deputy, a young Communist and a graduate of the University of Belorussia, was also suspected of being a National-Democrat and arrested.

New Personalities in the Party /41/

665 In connection with the beginning of the destruction of the national movement there were even some changes in the

apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belorussia. The chief of the culture and propaganda division, Dr. Senkevich, was recalled from his work to Moscow. A teacher by profession, he became implicated in revolutionary activities in 1950. When reprisals began he was forced to flee to the United States where he remained until the 1917 revolution. By the way, because of complicity in the same affair with Senkevich the prominent Belorussian Soviet writer, Iakub Kolos, was sentenced at the same time to three years confinement which he served in the jail in Minsk. In the United States Senkevich managed to graduate from a university and become a doctor of medicine. After the 1917 revolution he returned to Russia via Japan and there evidently joined the Communist Party. Then, since he was a Belorussian, he was sent to work there and appointed the chief of one of the Central Committee's subdivisions. Rather shy by nature and no longer young he shared the views of the nationalists concerning the cultural rebirth of the Belorussian nation , and while occupying the position of chief of one of the subdivisions of the Central Committee, Senkevich took steps to ensure that all the cultural measures were put into effect. Actually, all problems connected with the cultural degeneration of Belorussia passed across his desk to the Central Committee, and all decrees were formulated there as well. During the purge of the National-Democrats Dr. Senkevich was removed from his job and recalled to Moscow. What happened to him later is not known although evidently he died. A young Communist, Chernushevich, was appointed in his place; he had ascended the ladder of the Communist hierarchy rather rapidly, as late as 1925 he was no more than the chief of militia in some isolated district.

In those days the second secretary of the Party played a prominent role in the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party. In about 1928, the Belorussian, Vasilevich, occupied that position. Before becoming Second Secretary he had been People's Commissar of Finances in Belorussia. According to the established order the second secretary was the actual director of all organizational work, his primary task was to supervise the distribution of Party cadres throughout the Republic. In Belorussia the first secretary was always an envoy of the Kremlin; his duties consisted of making sure that directives from Moscow were fulfilled. In those times the appointment and transfer of Party cadres went according to the following order. If a People's Commissar needed a responsible worker for work either in the Commissariat or in some district, he generally addressed himself to the second secretary of the Party Central Committee with the indicated nomination. Any problem arising in connection with the man's recall could be ironed out with the director of the institution where he was working, and usually with this the affair was terminated. In /42/ such cases the worker's appointment was effected by sending him a so-called "pass". If he was at a more responsible post his transfer or appointment had to be entered into the record of the Central Committee decrees. In all cases confirmation by the second secretary of the Party or an instruction from him was sufficient. If the People's Commissariat had to transfer its own man from one district to another or recall him to work in the Commissariat, the secretary of the district Party committee had to assent to it. In case the district refused to release the man, the second secretary again had the last word in the matter. Thus the second secretary disposed of the Party cadres, and this fact was highly significant with regard to the national work. Vasilevich was very closely allied with the leaders of the national movement in Belorussia and shared their views. All appointments passed through his hands as well as dismissals and in some cases the recall of Party workers, and this permitted him to operate with proven workers and to distribute them wherever necessary. The agenda of the Central Committe Bureau's sessions was always approved by him; he also outlined speeches beforehand and appointed the speakers. The activities of Secretary Vasilevich were much in evidence and could hardly escape the attention of the Kremlin, especially after the 1930 arrests. In the second half of 1930, he was recalled from Belorussia and sent to work as director of the land department in one of the Siberian oblast's. As a result, during the Ezhovshchina, Vasilevich was held accountable for everything that had happened in Belorussia and shared the fate of thousands of those arrested at the time. Less consequential functionaries of the Party Central Committee were also transferred to other jobs.

V. Sharangovich was sent out by Moscow in place of Vasilevich as Second Secretary. He was Belorussian by nationality and in the first years of Soviet power had worked in Belorussia as prosecutor for the People's Commissariat of Justice. It appears that he was a partisan during the Soviet-Polish War, was taken prisoner by the Poles, and exchanged for someone after the conclusion of peace. From his very first days as second secretary, Sharangovich quickly fell in line with the leading Belorussian Party workers. He was

665 unaffected and accessible. He took under his direct protection and guidance the young Communists who were just out of the Komsomol and resolutely promoted them to rather responsible positions, taking notice of their successes and helping them in their work. Most Belorussian Party workers considered Sharangovich as one of their own and trusted him.

The Estonian, Gei, was at that time the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. He had been sent /48/ out by the Kremlin around the end of 1929. Before his appointment nothing either good or bad was known of him, and it is possible that he was a lower level functionary somewhere in the R. S. F. S. R. In any case, his appointment to Belorussia was looked upon as a promotion since the region was regarded as a rather responsible field of Party activity. Its position on the border, the complicated state of its national affairs, and the policy which was being followed at the time within Belorussia, demanded that the Party secretary be adaptable, tactful, and careful in his work. Gei was not noted for his masterful organizational ability, and in his work as director of a republican Party he was not outstanding. He did not vaunt himself, nor induce others to do so. By nature he had no friends nor in fact any close relationships. Nothing was altered in the organization of work by Sharangovich's arrival. At that time everything was subordinated to accomplishing one task -- the speediest realization of the collectivization in Belorussia. Hundreds of workers were sent out in brigades throughout the regions and districts to give on the spot assistance. Telegrams with the sternest possible directives were dispatched from the center, setting all kinds of requirements and demanding reports. All efforts were aimed at declaring "total collectivization" in Belorussia -- about which a telegram could then be sent to the Kremlin. The kolkhozes were given various high-sounding titles. Here and there the first secretary of the Party was remembered and a kolkhoz named after him. The name Gei was also given to a rather large peat factory not far from Minsk.

During the Ezhovshchina Gei's name was removed from the kolkhozes and also from the peat factory. By this sign the Belorussians were able to guess that Gei had turned up in the camp of the "enemies of the motherland."

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665 There was a plan afoot, at first discussed very timidly and diffidently in a narrow circle of Belorussian workers, of maneuvering

557 to the point where the first secretary of the Party Central Commit-
665 tee would be a Belorussian. The idea began to catch on more and more obstinately after the arrival of Sharangovich in Minsk. It is conceivable that this aim was furthered by the opposition which developed for the succession to Lenin, and possibly the Belorussians chose this moment as the most appropriate. In any case, there was a tendency to support for the post of first secretary either V. Sharangovich or the president of the Sovnarkom /Council of People's Commissariats/ of the B. S. S. R., N. Goloded. Further blows were being dealt to Gei's already rather weak influence upon the course of events as well as his authority among the leaders. Sharangovich cooperated with him only formally, having gathered under his banner a group of Party secretaries from the local districts. Most of the People's Commissars supported the Sovnarkom President, N. Goloded, whose authority was unquestionable. Although not very highly educated, Goloded possessed great natural abilities and was a skillful leader. /44/ His protectors in Moscow were Molotov, Voroshilov, and Ordzhonikidze. Another prominent figure in Belorussia was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee of the B. S. S. R., Al. Cherviakov. Gei was almost isolated, and in several cases Goloded simply ignored him. Gei's position was also insecure because he had spent the first years of his work in Belorussia at the time when the national policy was still being promulgated -- when Prishchepov was People's Commissar of Agriculture and had aimed at strengthening the private peasants. It goes without saying that the first signature on all the decisions and decrees of that period concerning cultural reconstruction and the land problem was that of Gei. The Kremlin demanded a more decisive struggle with the Natsdemovshchina and the Prishchepovschina. However, the laurels of "watchfulness" for uncovering "counter-revolution" in the national question belonged to the G. P. U.; it was only after the event that Gei, through the use of academic brigades, was able to provide a foundation for proving the national theories harmful and for justifying the correctness of the 1930 arrests. Gei was recalled from Belorussia in 1931, and some Belorussian leaders saw in this the promise of the speedy realization of their desires to see a Belorussian as first secretary.

After a short while the Kremlin sent the Ingush, N. Gikalo, in place of Gei to Belorussia as first secretary. The hopes of the

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Belorussian leaders had not been justified. By sending Secretary Gikalo, the Kremlin made it very clear to the Belorussian Party leadership that it had no intention of indulging their desires and hopes of altering the established method of appointing the first secretary of the Party in Belorussia. Gikalo's further activities confirmed this in full. Evidently the Kremlin endowed him with wide and extraordinary powers and instructed him to put the Belorussian Party organization in order, forcing it to be subordinate to the one-man leadership of the first secretary. The Belorussians lost very much by this exchange of Gei for Gikalo. The Party summit had clearly miscalculated. Gikalo's subsequent work reduced their role to naught. He employed various methods for subjugating them. According to the etiquette previously in effect, it was considered inappropriate for even the first secretary of the Party to bring along his own collaborators. Gikalo disregarded this convention, and came to Minsk with a private secretary whom he introduced as his aide. Up until then such a position as aide had not even existed in Soviet or Party nomenclature. This one assumed an attitude of complete independence with regard to all Communists, including the leaders, and was very emphatic in insisting that all his orders be fulfilled as though they came from Gikalo himself. Gikalo not only did not oppose this state of affairs but even ordered compliance. /45/ He did not become intimate with anyone, and behaved quite independently. He devoted a lot of attention to the second secretary, Sharangovich. Gikalo knew that he enjoyed a certain amount of popularity and authority among Belorussians, and therefore he endeavored to bring him over to his own side and subordinate him to his influence. He accomplished it rather quickly. He began by issuing instructions that Sharangovich was to be credited with certain services which had previously never even been heard of. By means of propaganda Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement in Belorussia during the Soviet-Polish War. Gikalo arranged to have certain obliging Communists found to organize the collection of signatures on petitions requesting that Sharangovich be decorated for his past services. As a result of this campaign, assisted by intercessions from "up above" in the Central Committee of the Belorussian Communist Party, Sharangovich, twelve years after his "partisan exploits", was decorated by the Soviet government with the Order of the Red Banner, at that time the highest military decoration. Real partisans were secretly offended by this injustice

557 and felt that it was not much use performing services and deeds of 665 valor since what was really needed was sponsorship and protection. By this skillful maneuver Gikalo broke up the consolidation of the Belorussian Communist summit, and Sharangovich fell wholly under his influence.

The Communists who were grouped around Goloded, the President of the Sovnarkom, likewise decided to crown their protector with a decoration. In the first years of Soviet power, Goloded had been president of the executive committee in the country town of Gori-Gorkiy. In those times partisans still operated in the Belorussian forests, and the Soviets were waging a savage war against them. Because of his public capacity Goloded also took some part in repressing the anti-Soviet partisans. Infected with the example of Sharangovich's decoration Goloded's supporters also began to collect signatures on petitions. Only a small rumor was collected because the sphere of his activity had been limited to one uezd, the "deeds" of Goloded had not had many witnesses, and careful people took a look around anyway, to see how Secretary Gikalo would react to this campaign. The question of decorating Goloded was brought up before the Bureau of the Party Central Committee, but there it was shelved and never put in motion. This was a bitter affront to Goloded, and bad feeling developed between him and Gikalo. However he nursed his malice and did not enter into an open conflict with Gikalo, considering that such a struggle would be dangerous to himself. /46/

From the very first days of his work Gikalo had tried to place his men in the most important sectors of the work. He sent to Moscow for one of his good friends, a certain Posse who graduated from the Institute of Red Professorship /Institut krasnoi professury/. Posse occupied several positions in cultural institutions. He was a lecturer in the Communist university, in the journalistic institute, and also worked in the Institute of Party History. Posse was quite a talented writer and frequently placed his articles in Party organs. He was very active in the uprooting of National-Democracy, and Gikalo used him to exert influence on the cultural front. New faces likewise appeared on the Central Committee staff, placed there by Gikalo. At first they always occupied very inconsequential positions, a certain Lentsner was very characteristic in this respect. Previously he had been Trotsky's private secretary, as people who

were interested in the matter explained it. Lentsner understood full well that having been an intimate of Trotsky would make it very difficult for him to carry on any widespread activities without considerable tenacity on his own part as well as extensive support and backing. Gikalo also took this into account. In addition, Lentsner's energetic nature strove after power, where Gikalo also supported him since he liked Lentsner's assertiveness and evidently had known him before. In order to provide Lentsner with lower-level Party work for a term where he might demonstrate his practical abilities, Gikalo appointed him secretary of the Sennenskii Rayon Party Committee. This rayon occupies a rather prominent place in Belorussia as it is very large and devoted primarily to flax growing. In fulfilling the plans for sowing, harvesting, and, most important of all, for government deliveries, the work of the rayon Party secretary is appreciated very highly. Lentsner appraised the situation correctly. By applying force and using highly repressive measures against the kolkhozes he managed to see that the kolkhozes of the Sennenskii rayon not only fulfilled the plan for linen deliveries of flax but even over-fulfilled it. The rayon participated in numerous other Soviet economic campaigns. After these "victories" Lentsner, in order to publicize his efforts, wrote a pamphlet with the title Iz otstaiushchikh v peredovye /From Lagards to Leaders/. Ostensibly the pamphlet praised the Party leadership, personified by Gikalo, through whose efforts the Sennenskii rayon took the lead in forced deliveries of flax. By means of percentages and figures the results of the efforts of former years were contrasted with the previous year when Lentsner had become Party Secretary. There were a lot of distortions and false comparisons in the pamphlet. In this way Lentsner presented Gikalo with a chance to emphasize his successful choice of Lentsner as rayon secretary, which had been fully justified by experience, and, what is more important, to propose after several months of local level work that the Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party appoint Lentsner editor of the Party newspaper Zvezda /The Star/ /47/. Lentsner was recalled from the rayon and confirmed as editor; thus this important and influential position, one which Gikalo was particularly anxious to have occupied by his own man, was filled by a person who owed allegiance to him and was responsive to his instructions. In his new book Lentsner began to copy the methods of the infallible Moskovskaia Pravda /Moscow Pravda/ in full.

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665 The moment was very appropriate. Stalin had settled accounts with the opposition and become the completely powerful leader. The theory and practice of leadership was picked up and quickly began to spread into the provinces. Even in the innermost rayons, the rural kolkhoz Party members shouted at meetings, "All hail to our leader so-and-so!" Any secretary of the local Party Committee could be considered such a leader. The "leader" accepted all this enthusiasm as his due. The leadership treatment and fawning before Gikalo were of course especially outrageous. Lentsner, as editor of Zvezda /The Star/, lauded Gikalo and spared no words or phrases. His portraits were published in large editions, and clubs, reading rooms, Party and Soviet institutions, schools, and empty shop windows were decorated with them in large quantities. Access to him became a great deal more difficult, and just to see him a special pass was necessary. He did not always receive even responsible Party functionaries. The following incident will attest just how cozy a nest had been feathered by means of 'kadership' and apple polishing. During a banquet, after a session of the Party plenum everyone was shouting, "All hail to our leader, Comrade Gikalo." However there was one member of the banquet who started to quarrel, evidently after considerable intake of alcohol, about the propriety of calling Gikalo a "leader". This incident was immediately brought to the attention of Secretary Sharangovich. The audacious individual was expelled from from the Party, but the affair stretched on for more than a year and finally came to the ears of Moscow. The guilty person was excused by the fact that of course there is only one leader -- Stalin, and although Gikalo is an excellent Party director still he is not a leader. The guilty man was reinstated in the Party, with a reprimand, however, for "quarreling without cause". At the time there were five Party secretaries in various fields of activity, all perpetually guarded by G. P. U. agents.

Purges 1933 and 1934

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661 In 1933 there was a purge in the Party. Gikalo used it to get rid of certain elements which were troublesome to him and thus to strengthen his own position still further. To attain these ends he selected a commission with particular care. It was important to choose a president /48/ for the purge. In order to settle matters, once and for all with the national movement in Narkompros, the Academy of Sciences, the University, the State Publishing House,

665 the National Commissariat of Health /Narkomzdrava/, his wife,
661 Gikalo-Chizhova was appointed President of the purge in these institutions. She was reported to be a partisan from the Caucasus. When she first arrived in Belorussia she had occupied the post of director of the journalistic institute.

The purge was public; those involved had to recite their biographies and confess their sins. Entry was free to all, and not only was every accusatory speech permitted but even encouraged. There were cases of Communists, especially those who considered themselves old fighters with long records and who did not want to undergo these unpleasantnesses, turning in their Party cards themselves. At the opposite extreme, some farsighted people arranged to have their friends come to the meeting on the day of their particular purge and by their speeches attempt to portray them in the best possible light. Particular pressure was applied upon those who had been implicated in the national movement, Trotskyites, and those who had belonged to other parties. They were mercilessly expelled. Some time before the purge, various Party archives had been examined and G. P. U. reports which could serve as a basis for expulsion from the Party selected. In order to compromise directors of institutions who because of their good standing in the Party could not be summarily expelled, another method was employed. In such cases Gikalo usually issued a directive to expel without mercy all Communist fellow-workers of the one whom it was proposed to compromise. Having discredited the environment it was then easy to throw in the accusation that the director had been exposed to unhealthy influences. This is what was done to Sovnarkom President Goloded, the president of the Central Executive Committee, A. Cherniakov, and the People's Commissar of Public Health, Tsentsiper.

Arrests of Belorussian Nationalists - 1933

In 1933, there were some arrests of Belorussian intellectuals;
661 they were not exactly of a mass nature but were still significant. The victims in most cases were young Belorussians poets and writers, who were evidently regarded as a relapse from the mass arrests of 1930. This literary youth had given great promise and was burning with the desire to serve its nation. The second group of arrests was from among prominent Belorussian public figures, mainly those

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665 661 A new Party purge took place after the killing of Kirov; it went under the innocent designation of a "certification of Party documents." This purge was not public and had as its slogan -- "Let's put Party affairs in order." Externally it looked as though the Party records and documents were being checked and collated. Accuracy was required in all files. However, in actuality, this was the most terrible purge of all. All Communists who had ever been penalized, those excluded from the Party in the past, ones suspected of nationalistic inclinations, Trotskyism, and those who had come from other parties, all those were under suspicion and had their Party cards taken away. Lists were drawn up of the ones selected, and their expulsion from the Party was legalized by a Central Committee decree. This work was handled by the so-called Commissioner of Party Control, who had taken the place of the Central Control Commission. In some institutions as many as fifty percent were ousted; everything was done behind the scenes, and it was rare that anyone appealed. However, in some isolated cases Gikalo called in the expellees for examination. In Minsk Professor Kaminskii, a man of seventy-five and a specialist on eye diseases, was expelled after an examination of his Party record /51/ on the grounds that before joining the Party he had been in the Bund and in the Socialist-Revolutionary Party. To Gikalo's question as to why he had changed from one party to another he cleverly remarked that all his life he had been seeking the best party and at last had found it ...

Eventually, of course, some of those expelled were reinstated by Moscow, but this took years. In Pravda there appeared articles about excessive zeal, a too formalistic attitude and too little sensitivity, which stated that some honorable people had been expelled.

557 665 After the check-up of Party documents several commissars were recalled from Belorussia, even though they had not been expelled from the Party and had not suffered any Party penalities. The reasons were deep and secret. Those recalled from Belorussia were Belorussian by nationality. In the past they had not been mixed up in active national work, having on the contrary replaced the commissars who were fired and arrested in 1930. However, during their work they had not practiced indiscriminate defamation of everything national in Belorussia and in many cases quietly encouraged various manifestations of the national work. They had been embittered by the dictatorial tactics of Secretary Gikalo, and there were other motives as well. These commissars had joined forces around Sovnarkom president Goloded, Gikalo's strong and stubborn opponent. They never ceased to regard him as a possible candidate for the post of first party

secretary in Belorussia once Sharangovich, after getting his decoration, went over to Gikalo's side. Goloded was a good business man and not a worker in the national movement. While president of the Sovnarkom, in 1928, he carefully studied the economy of the region, aimed to develop industry in the Republic, and supported Belorussian cultural institutions and theaters. Gikalo discerned in Goloded a powerful and influential competitor. However, by his clever tactics during the Party purges Gikalo managed to cut him off from most of his support. Platun was recalled from Narkompros and sent out to Siberia as the boss of the political section of Sovkhoz. D. Chernushevich, the former director of the Cultural and Propaganda Section of the Central Committee, was appointed in his place. People's Commissar of Agriculture Rechitskii was recalled and sent to the Privolzhskaia oblast' to manage transportation. In his place, Goloded's deputy, the Pole Genek, was appointed. The President of the Higher Council of the National Ecomomy /Vysshii Soviet Narodnogo Khoziaistva/ (as the system of industrial administration was called before the organization of special commissariats) Grisevich was appointed director of the political section of some railroad in Siberia. People's Commissar of Health Tsentsiper, a friend of Goloded, was also recalled. A certain Surta was sent out from Moscow to replace him. /52/ All these had been old Belorussian figures. On the eve of the Ezhovshchina they were temporarily faced with honorable exile.

Party Personnel Shifts 1934-1936

In about 1934 the second secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee, Sharangovich, was recalled. His transfer out of Belorussia was evidently the work of first secretary Gikalo. Sharangovich, as has already been indicated, enjoyed some authority among Belorussian workers in the first period of his work. He was considered one of them, and he was also closer to them and more accessible than the Ingush, Gikalo, all the more so since he did not display that particular dislike for the Belorussian movement which Gikalo manifested in his work. (1) Upon Sharangovich's

1. It should be noted even so that in spite of all his "particular dislike for the Belorussian national movement"

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Gikalo shielded Belorussian literature and art, in fact patronized it, similar to one of his followers - Ponomarenko about whom more later.

arrival for work in Belorussia Gikalo, aiming to divide the unity of the Belorussian Communist leaders, tried to attract him to his side, and in this he succeeded almost completely. But in the course of time Sharangovich became superfluous, for Gikalo and for Belorussia. His recall coincided with the reorganization of the Central Party Commission and the Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection, the so-called Ts. K. K. -R. K. I., which were separated into two independent institutions. Sharangovich was appointed commissioner of party control in Kazakhstan. As secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party his scope of activity had been broader and more varied since every day he had to mix with a number of leading workers and was approached for directives on all problems of Party and Soviet construction. The commissioner of party control worked in a limited field, his job consisting mainly of analyzing all possible infractions of Party ethics and expulsions from the Party, examination of appeals from expulsion, and the imposition of Party penalties. Generally old Party members were appointed to this post, ones who were no longer capable of broad practical activity in other phases of work. On one hand Sharangovich's amour propre was flattered at being appointed as an organ of Party control, at being entrusted by the Kremlin with control functions over the Party in Kazakhstan, but simultaneously he was removed from the political scene, and this did not suit his restless nature.

On Sharangovich's recommendation, the Belorussian, Volkovich, was appointed second secretary of the Central Committee of the Party. Until his appointment Volkovich had been the president of the Bobruysk executive committee and was not widely known. At his new and prominent post he made no impression at all, being sick frequently while Sharangovich was secretary. Belorussian workers had generally come to him to have questions decided, but after his departure not many came to Volkovich, knowing his weak orientation in questions of Soviet and Party construction. All efforts were made to gain admittance to Gikalo himself as he was now the only real Party functionary left in Belorussia. To tell the truth there were still three secretaries left in the Party Central Committee, but they played no conspicuous role since they were occupied with specialized phases of

557 activity. Such a one, for example, was the Special Secretary for
665 Transport, Ivanov. He did not concern himself with general Party direction. Thus Gikalo's only opposition was the president of the Sovnarkom, Goloded. Their mutual relations were deteriorating rapidly.

The tense situation in the country at that time became abruptly worse. In Moscow, efforts to annihilate and liquidate the members of the opposition were being intensified. There was a significant shake up of Party leaders in command of military districts throughout the Soviet Union. Heightened "awareness" was being demanded of everyone. Any sort of exposure was encouraged. . . The following incident was typical of Belorussian conditions. Trotsky's former secretary -- a certain Lentsner -- mentioned on page 46, was editor of the Party newspaper, Zvezda. He was a very adroit fellow, and Secretary Gikalo was particularly sympathetic toward him. When the unmasking campaign had reached a rather intense pitch, Gikalo made haste to spirit his favorite out of Belorussia into the Dnepropetrovsk Oblast', doing this without any publicity or the usual Party formalities. Having made arrangements with the secretary of Dnepropetrovsk oblast', a man named Kataevich who was widely known throughout the Soviet Union, Gikalo dispatched Lentsner to him without a decree from the Bureau of the Party Central Committee. There he was given the post of director of the Oblast' Agricultural department. Goloded, being a member of the Party Central Committee, took advantage of this. At a session of the Bureau he demanded to have explained upon what foundation a worker of top Party standing, the editor of the Party newspaper, and appointed to this post by a plenum of the Party Central Committee, /54/ was sent out of Belorussia without the Bureau's sanction. Gikalo was placed in an extremely sensitive position, the more so since Lentsner had such a heavy black mark against him, as friendship with Trotsky was considered to be. In the minutes of the Central Committee Bureau's session Goloded entered his own particular opinion concerning Secretary Gikalo's incorrect activities as manifested in his granting leave to Lentsner and the event became known in the Kremlin since all minutes were sent to the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party in Moscow.

It seems that Secretary Gikalo was recalled from Belorussia in the first part of 1936. He received a post in the Kharkov Oblast' as second secretary of the Party. It was evident to all that he had

557 665 been demoted . . . Sovnarkom President Goloded had become temporarily unassailable, and in Moscow he was above any sort of suspicion. As for Gikalo, to be changed from party director of a republic to second secretary of an oblast', even one with heavy industry, was considered a step down.

After an absence of more than a year in Kazakhstan, V. Sharangovich was sent by the Kremlin as first secretary of the Central Committee of the Party in Belorussia. It looked as if the Belorussian Communists had attained their heart's desire -- as first secretary they got a Belorussian who for the third time was returning to work in Belorussia. The ensuing year brought with it many griveous changes.

Yezhovshchina - 1937

643 /this spelling occurs in the original, otherwise the transliteration used is "Ezhovshchina." Translator/

In the middle of 1937, the president of the Supreme Soviets of the B. S. S. R. and the U. S. S. R., Aleksandr Grigor'evich Cherviakov, committed suicide. A Belorussian by nationality and born in the village of Dukorka thirty-five kilometers from Minsk, he was a teacher by specialty, having graduated from the normal school in Wilno. In the First World War Cherviakov was an officer. The February Revolution found him in Petrograd where he subsequently organized the Belorussian soldiers of the Petrograd garrison. After the Bolshevik seizure of power Cherviakov entered the Communist Party. When on February 27, 1919 the so-called Lithuanian-Belorussian Soviet Republic was organized on the territory of Lithuania and Belorussia, Cherviakov became Deputy Commissar of Public Education (1). From the day of /55/ the second announcement of the Belorussian S. S. R. up to his death Cherviakov was the irreplaceable president of the Central Executive Committee and then of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. He was not noted for his revolutionary activities. It is possible that in the

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1. Immediately before this Cherviakov was Commissar of Public Education in the first government of the B. S. S. R (cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsikopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1934 Edition, Vol. LXI, page 195/ (sic).

7: Krushinsky - 65 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

665 661 Even Party Secretary Sharangovich's turn came up at last. After a short time as first secretary of the Party he was arrested. His fate is known from the Moscow newspapers. Sharangovich was tried along with the group headed by Bukharin. The trial was public, and portions of it were printed in the papers. It seems that all the defendents were sentenced to death, including Sharangovich. The impression he made was that of a sincere and hearty man. As was previously noted he had gained /58/ the confidence of many Belorussian Communists, especially young ones. However, in the light of subsequent events his activities in Belorussia give indications of secretiveness and lack of sincerity toward those who trusted him. No Belorussian got decorated for partisan activities during the Soviet-Polish War, yet Sharangovich was decorated ten years later. And in any case nothing had been heard of his guerilla activity at the time. It is common knowledge that there was no unified command over the partisans in 1919 and 1920, and if Sharangovich was made the leader of the partisan movement, the actual participants themselves only learned about it afterwards. His change in allegiance after he received the decoration and became Gikalo's obedient tool left a bad taste in the mouths of many Communists. His term as first secretary was marked by the deaths of president of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. A. Cherviakov, and of president of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R. N. Goloded. Even if Sharangovich was not primarily responsible for their deaths, nonetheless he was very close to the whole affair. In the last stage of his life, at the trial of the Bukharin group, after Bukharin had testified, Sharangovich made some remark as this: "Bukharin, why tell lies here in court?" Even in a Soviet court Sharangovich tried to gain some advantage for himself.

665 Instead of the defunct Sharangovich the Kremlin sent one Volkov as Belorussian first secretary. All of his "activity" took place at the height of the Ezhovshchina. Volkov did not concern himself with leadership but was mainly an adjunct of the N. K. V. D., and "honorary" office which he filled with particular pleasure and satisfaction. A lot has been said and written about the N. K. V. D.'s activities during that period.

665 661 By nature Volkov, the new secretary of the Party Central Committee, was a crude despot with the manners such as chekists had during the first years of the Soviet system. Uncultured and

665 unbridled in his expressions, he produced a repellent impression.
661 He spent his time making speeches at various meetings during which he fumed against "the enemies of the people." Right and left he ascribed various kinds of crimes, particularly espionage and wrecking, to various victims. After such a characterization the agents of the N. K. V. D. had nothing left to do except collect the victims and cart them off to the cellars. It is appropriate to hear the story of a certain Prokopchuk who was a professor of dermatology. At a meeting of workers in medicine Volkov made a speech accusing the professor of having spread veneral diseases among his patients for the purpose of sabotage. By the way, from the Soviet point of view, Professor Prokopchuk's political reliability was suspect least of all. /59/ In the past he had been a partisan in the Soviet-Polish War; after graduating from a medical institute he applied to become a specialist, and as a reliable man and a Communist he was ordered to Paris to perfect himself in his specialty. After this accusation Volkov did not allow Prokopchuk the chance to speak in his own defense.

Volkov sent his henchmen into the country districts, and they operated in exactly the same fashion. These envoys of Volkov, so-called Central Committee instructors, upon arrival in some particular rayon, would convoke a Party meeting and right there, having accused the contemplated victim of espionage and sabotage, would take away his Party card. The N. K. V. D. would then finish the job. One particular instance of this sort became widely known. About six kilometers from Minsk there is a rayon center, the town Cherven' (formerly Igumen). A certain Plentnev was Party secretary in this rayon -- an average director and not outstanding at all. Formerly he had been the village schoolmaster. At a Party meeting, Volkovs' deputy took his Party card away and accused him of espionage. Able to foresee the course events would take, Pletnev, who was sick and very nervous and did not want to have to wait for these unpleasant developments, decided to commit suicide. He shot himself in the temble, but did not succeed to kill himself. The severely wounded Pletnev was arrested by the N. K. V. D. and put in the prisoners' ward of a hospital. He lived, but the shot had severed his ocular nerve, and he was left blind in both eyes. After a lengthy arrest he was set free. The Ezhovshchina passed; here and there, timidly and without any special publicity, new "enemies

of the people" were beginning to be uncovered--those who had been arrested inhumanly and using such refined forms or derision in carrying on the investigations into non-existant crimes. The Central Committee instructor who had been directly responsible for Pletnev's blindness was remembered, and a public trial was organized in Minsk as a warning example. By the magnitude of the offense and the way events were developing, most people thought that the accused would be threatened with the death penalty. However he got off with five years imprisonment. One wonders if he survived his sentence in the concentration camps.

As a display some saboteurs were tried publicly in Gomel' during the Ezhovshchina. Those implicated were the president of the Gomel' City Soviet (his name escapes me), the director of the City Health Department -- a certain Gurlo, and the head of the repair shops for tractors and farm machinery whose name was Valiukevich. All three were Communists. They were accused of unbelievable crimes, and they admitted them not only in the N. K. V. D. cellars but also in court -- something which made a very deep impression upon the masses of workers present at the trial. By the way, before the revolution Gurlo had /60/ worked at the very insignificant job of town postman; he attached himself to the Bolsheviks in the very first days of their power, and later, after a number of years, became director in the large telegraph and post offices. Gurlo, like the other two who were accused was absolutely not inclined to become a wrecker. However, he "admitted" that through a group of agents he had infected small children with syphilis while they were still in the nursing homes. All three were condemned to be shot. Gurlo's agents, of course, perished at the same time before the eyes of the public, without a trial. Tall N. K. V. D. operatives took them in custody and carried them away in the "black raven." Then there were persistent and highly probable rumors to the effect that they had been promised life and liberty for "confessing."

There was another case. A forty-year-old woman named Novikov was arrested in Gomes'. She was a Party member, half-educated, whose work was organizing women on the kolkozes. She was confronted with a charge of spying for Germany, based on the fact that during the first World War she had earned her bread by washing the German soldiers' laundry. The charge was

665 absurd, and the victim would not confess to the investigator. So he
began to try to assure her that her "confession" was needed by the
661 Party. In her simplicity Novikov stated quite reasonably that he, the
investigator, was also a member of the Party and if the Party needed
someone to admit to a charge of espionage, here he was presented with
the opportunity. By a lucky chance Novikov succeeded in being re-
leased; a good friend of hers who was acquainted with an influential
N.K.V.D. agent helped her. Novikov herself used to tell about this.

They arrested one member of the Komsomol. He was assigned the role of having spied for Italy. Knowing himself to be absolutely innocent, he stubbornly refused to confess. The investigator beat him terribly, put him in a cell, put him on the assembly line -- the fellow was unable to stand up under these methods and was ready to confess. The other prisoners in the cell took pity on the innocent youth, but of course they were unable to assist him. The Komsomol member, by the way, was a student in a school of design. There was one sharp-witted person in the cell, and he taught the Komsomol member how to "confess." At the regular examination he confessed that his contacts during his espionage activities had been the Italians Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and others. The investigator was overjoyed by the admission, having gotten what he wanted and complied with the wishes of his "superior." He fed the Komsomol member, gave him some makhorka, and sent him back to the cell. There he sat for about two more weeks, thanking his preceptor for the successful method of confession. /61/ He was called in again for examination. The elder investigator swore at him for turning the investigation into a farce, but the young man explained that his teachers had certainly been famous Italians. The ignoramus investigator had not had a notion who these world-renowned men were and believed that Raphael was an organizer of spy rings.

During the Ezhovshchina the Belorussian Communist press
626 played an especially repulsive role. The so-called newspaper
661 correspondents scoured the various Soviet agencies and institutions
for accusatory material. In this work assistance was given by the
directors of the secret departments of commissariats and other im-
portant establishments. These departments were called "special sec-
tions," and in most cases were under the supervision of the secretaries
of the Communist cells. When some sort of evidence, no matter

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697 Windows were reduced in size by the three quarters and filled with
661 bricks, wooden shields being set in some, to make it impossible to see the jail yard or the side of the street or to see the outside world in general. In the yards of the prison special cages were constructed for the prisoners' walks, surrounded by a high board fence without a roof, into which they let prisoners. Special small cells were made, completely without windows, and the number of rooms of confinement of all kinds was increased. The prison shops were made over into cells for holding prisoners. The prisons were transformed into places for keeping people who were under investigation. Those convicted were sent to distant concentration camps. Rooms were kept strictly isolated one from another, but nonetheless news was not only quickly disseminated throughout the prison but even penetrated beyond the walls.

When the terror slackened a very insignificant part of the
661 prisoners was set free. However, almost every one of them had been ruined in health: teeth had been knocked out, ribs broken, ear drums shattered, rectums injured from being forced to sit on the sharp point of a stool or chair leg. But the principal sickness was spiritual emptiness, and for many, bitter disillusionment, dejection, apathy. Those liberated who were not Party members returned to their former places of work, if they had not already been replaced by others. For this "forced" absence they were not reimbursed, even though Soviet labor law makes provisions for the individual's wages to be paid him by his employer if through no fault of his own he is unable to work. Many had been forced to sign an attestation that they would not divulge what they had seen and heard in the N. K. V. D., and this paralyzed any demand that their legal rights be protected which had
665 been mercilessly violated. Unenviable also was the lot of Party
661 members who were set at liberty.[1] They had to go through even more trouble to be reinstated in the Party. The very fact of arrest made the Party member an expellee. No doubt many of them would have been glad to remain outside the Party, but a person who had been expelled and made no effort at reinstatement was automatically put in an incomparably worse situation than that of any non-Party person. Leaders adopted a rather guarded attitude toward those who had been liberated from arrest. They were a source of fear and danger in the event of one of the possible twists of the Communist Party's unforeseeable and changeable policy.

[1] [After having been arrested during the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

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Ezhovshchina -- Summary /66/

661 665 The Ezhovshchina did away with nearly all the senior members of the Communist Party, and of all those with pre-October standing there remained, apparently, only a few isolated individuals. All those who had been partisans in the Soviet-Polish War were annihilated; before the Ezhovshchina they had been considered a bulwark of all Communist measures in the outlying districts, especially in the ones on the Polish-Soviet border, and not a single political campaign could be promulgated without their active participation. Nor did those Communists escape who in their time had been sent to do underground work in Western Belorussia; they were accused of being Polish spies. Those who had been taken prisoner by the Germans during the first World War were also included, as they had seen the outside, even though their memories of it were far from pleasant since most of them had lived through a famine there. All Party members without exception who had, to any degree and no matter how remotely, been contaminated with Trotskyism or some other kind of opposition, were arrested.

661 The remnants of the Belorussian intelligentsia were arrested. This now included people who had not participated actively in anything but who, by their outward characteristics, could have been supposed capable of independent thought: teachers, agronomists, engineers, planners and others. Almost none of the Belorussian poets and writers escaped. All who had served terms of imprisonment after being arrested in 1930 were arrested a second time during the Ezhovshchina and underwent a more severe form of punishment. In addition to the fact that the same Belorussian national workers who in 1930 had been condemned for National-Democracy were this time accused of Fascism, they also received a sentence of more years in concentration camps or were shot. A part of those arrested and condemned in 1930 was brought to the N. K. V. D. in Minsk. By means of examinations and visual confrontations they were used as witnesses for the indictments of those more recently arrested, and they, through the testimonies of these same newly arrested prisoners they themselves either had their sentences increased or were executed. Some prominent Belorussian figures who escaped were the satiricist, Kondrat Krapiva, and the former president of the Union of Belorussian writers, the Communist M. Klinkovich who out of fear of arrest cut

661 his throat with a razor but was saved from dying. Possibly it was
just this which saved him from arrest. Others who were not arrested
were Z. Biadulia and the budding writers, Brovko and Glebko. /67/

After the Ezhovshchina

625 After the Ezhovshchina accounts were settled with those
whose function it had been to execute the will of the organizers of
661 the terror. However, this took place within the walls of the N. D. V.
D. In Vitebsk a certain Grechkin who had been arrested and
subsequently set free was summoned to the (N. K. V. D.) court to serve
as a witness in a case involving the inadmissibility of torture during
examination. The investigator had knocked out several of Grechkin's
teeth and was found guilty, but Grechkin was compelled to sign a
statement that he would not divulge any information about what
had transpired. The document, I Accuse the Kremlin of the
Genocide of My Nation, by Nikolai Abramchik, published in 1950 in
Toronto, Canada, in English, will provide sufficient testimony to
the deeds of the N. K. V. D. in Belorussia during the Ezhovshchina.

665 The secretary of the Communist Party Central Committee,
661 Volkov, was recalled from Belorussia after the Ezhovshchina and
sent off to work in Mordovskaia oblast'. What became of him
subsequently is not known, but the Belorussians will not forget this black
figure who himself played such a very vital part in the slaughter ot
tens of thousands of people. His cruelty was exceptional. P.
Ponomarenko, who formerly had been a political agent in the Red
Army in the Far East, was appointed first secretary. A new
direction could be sensed in the Party's work, and this was
particularly noticeable where the national movement was concerned.
Formerly, national characteristics had been taken into account in
various elections, appointments, and recruitments, but after the
arrival of Ponomarenko the national problem ceased to exist
661 officially. The whole group of the former leaders had been destroyed.[1]
643 Natalevich -- a man little known to the Belorussian masses,
lacking in authority and initiative, and obedient to the will of the
secretary of the Central Committee -- settled down into the
presidency of the Supreme Soviet of the B. S. S. R. To the post of
Secretary of the Supreme Soviet -- who in fact was the deputy
president -- a completely unknown worker from around Mogilev
661 was appointed. A young doctor named Kiselev, who was totally

[1] [During the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

000 decided to give Wilno to Lithuania, knowing that in this way it would become Soviet.

However, before deserting Wilno even temporarily, the military high command of the Red Army picked a special purchasing commission which bought up manufactured articles with captured Polish money. They also bought hides and leather goods, various types of machinery, etc. All the purchases were taken out of Wilno and exported into the center of the Soviet Union. The bigger merchants concealed most of their wares, but their stores were discovered with the aid of their servants (shop assistants). After the termination of the officially-appointed period for the transfer of Wilno to Lithuania the city remained in the hands of the N.K.V.D. for two more days. The latter liquidated all the "unneeded" elements in the city and the prisons.

557 ● [665] 177 The Communist guidance of the life of the Belorussian people during P. Ponomarenko's term in office, can be characterized as a period of comparative quiet. No one particularly admired his methods or his personality, but there were no disturbing occurrences similar to those which marked the secretaryships of Gikalo and Volkov. The unification of western Belorussia distracted people's attention to a great extent from the various unnecessary experiments and tensions on the old territory of Soviet Belorussia. Everyone who had the chance, particularly the working intelligentsia, writers, poets, theatrical employees, singers, and musicians, used all their pull to get assigned to the newly-attached territory. Most of them wanted to get acquainted with the new capitalist world and see there the horrible suffering and generally pitiable existence of the peasantry and workers. Instead of it they saw, if not an absolutely high standard of living, at least /71/ the possibility of acquiring both food products and other articles for everyday use. These circumstances dispersed the legend of the oppressiveness of capitalism. In accordance with his means everyone tried to get clothes and shoes for himself, and in particular to buy something for his wife and children. Every conceivable employee in Moscow, from the All-Union Commissariats and various trusts right up to deputy commissars tried to get into Western Belorussia. The directors of Belorussian agricultural trusts acquired light cars with small cylinder displacement and often brought them back even to the All-Union-Commissars, for a price, of course, but a comparatively low one. This type of light car appeared not

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661 186 Democratic Republic'. The 'Centre' was reported to receive its intructions from Vilna and to recruit its membership from among 'remnants of Kulaks, White Guards and counter-revolutionary nationalists'.

665 186 According to the then First Party Secretary of Byelorussia, Gikalo, the party was forced to fight not only against an outside organization but also against nationalist agents in its own ranks. These nationalist agents, said Gikalo, had penetrated into the party in the early thirties and had apparently succeeded in occupying a large number of positions in the local government machinery. As in the Ukraine, the offensive against the nationalists inside the Communist Party was launched on the express orders of the leadership of the All-Union Communist Party. [177] The All-Union Central Committee intervened in Minsk not only to secure the purity of communist principles in Byelorussia but also to protect in that republic the interests of Russian culture and the Russian language.

Moscow's intervention was precipitated by what became known as the 'Stsepuro Affaire'. A teacher with the name of Stsepuro had written a letter in Russian to a Byelorussian village council. Stsepuro's action led to a nationalistic outcry in which the local communist organizations and Soviet officials sided against the teacher, who in their view, ought to have written in Byelorussian. The matter was taken up by the Moscow newspaper *Pravda* and finally prompted the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party to draw attention to the 'distortion of Soviet nationalities policy' in Byelorussia. The statement of the Central Committee said that any ban against the Russian language and any persecution of persons using Russian were offences 'profitable only to the class enemy'. The Central Committee of the Byelorussian communists drew the necessary conclusions from the rebuke of the Moscow leaders and at a plenary meeting in December, 1933, proclaimed Byelorussian nationalism as the 'main danger'.[32]

Moscow had thus won the first round in the struggle against the local nationalist forces in Byelorussia. The second part of the fight reached its [661] climax in the summer of 1937 when all prominent Byelorussian communists were charged with conducting a nationalist policy. They included Alexander Grigoryevich Chervyakov, President of the Byelorussian Soviet Republic who committed suicide, the Prime Minister, Nikolai Matveyevich Goloded and the First Party Secretary and arch-purger of 1933–34, Gikalo. Both Goloded and Gikalo were executed. The main charge directed against them was that 'they had tried to tear away the Byelorussian people from the socialist culture of the Great Russian people'. The men around Chervyakov, asserted an official publication, 'were determined to oust the Russian language from the schools, to do away with Russian revolutionary plays, with Russian belletristic literature and works of music. They thus made it difficult for

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union
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the Byelorussian people to acquire both the inexhaustible cultural 665
treasures of the Russian people and the great cultural values created by 186
the Socialist Revolution'.

At the same time* Stalin's opponents among the Byelorussian com- 523
munists were accused of having been too liberal to the Polish minority in Byelorussia, a strange accusation from a party which professes to adhere to an internationalist ideology. The 'polonizing activities' of the Byelorussian 'Trotskyites, Bukharinites and national-fascists' consisted in having allowed a number of localities in Byelorussia to conduct their business in the Polish language and in having sanctioned the existence of a number of Polish schools.[38]

The purge of the Byelorussian communists terminated the policy of tolerance which the Byelorussian Government had shown towards its national minorities. This tolerance had been symbolically expressed in [186]
the coat of arms of the Byelorussian S.S.R., which contained the inscription 'Workers of the World Unite' in four languages: Byelorussian, Great Russian, Yiddish and Polish. The coat of arms in use since 1937 shows the same inscription in Byelorussian and Great Russian only. Together with the Polish inscription in Byelorussia's coat of arms the 'Polish National District' of the Byelorussian S.S.R. likewise disappeared. This district had served purposes similar to those of the 'Polish National District' of the Ukraine. It was called after Feliks Dzerzhinsky.

KOLAS AND KUPALA – BYELORUSSIAN LEADERS

The history of the fight between the Kremlin and Byelorussian nation- 186
alism includes the interesting case of the two prominent poets and 538
writers, Yanko Kupala (1882-1942) and Yakub Kolas, whom the Soviet régime drew over to the side of the 'proletarian revolution'. Both belonged to the petty bourgeois Byelorussian nationalist movement grouped around the weekly *Nasha Niva* (Our Cornfield) which long before the October Revolution was the first publication to advocate autonomy for the Byelorussian people.

Kupala was the son of an impoverished nobleman unable to pay for a higher education for his son. Kolas was of peasant origin. Kupala and Kolas had in common their violent hatred of the Polish landowners who owned over 6,000,000 acres of Byelorussian soil in 1914. As a symbolic challenge to the Poles they both threw off their Polish-sounding family names of Lutsevich and Mitskevich respectively and became known under their literary pseudonyms.

Kupala and Kolas found it difficult to overcome their 'bourgeois prejudices'. In their innermost feelings they remained nationalists however hard they tried to be 'good Soviet citizens'. In one of his poems

*[Cf. category 186, pp. 155-157--Analyst]

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

575 641 sport and defence organisations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organisations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[087] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

666 Art. 109. Members of all Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the regional, district, city, settlement and rural Soviets of Working People's Deputies -- are chosen by the electors on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot.

Art. 110. Elections of deputies are universal: all citizens of the Belorussian SSR who have reached the age of 18, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities, have the right to vote in the election of deputies and to be elected, with the exception of insane persons and persons who have been convicted by a court of law and whose sentences include deprivation of electoral rights.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

666 [64] Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR who has reached the age of 21, irrespective of race or nationality, sex, religion, educational and residential qualification, social origin, property status or past activities, has the right to be elected as a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 111. Elections of deputies are equal: each citizen has one vote; all citizens participate in elections on an equal footing.

[52] Art. 112. Women have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with men.

Art. 113. Citizens serving in the armed forces of the USSR have the right to elect and be elected on equal terms with all other citizens.

Art. 114. Elections of deputies are direct: all Soviets of Working People's Deputies, from rural and city Soviets of Working People's Deputies to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR, inclusive, are elected by the citizens by direct vote.

Art. 115. Voting at elections of deputies is secret.

Art. 116. Candidates for election are nominated according to electoral areas.

The right to nominate candidates is secured to public organisations and societies of the working people: Communist Party organisations, trade unions, cooperatives, youth organisations and cultural societies.

Art. 117. It is the duty of every deputy to report to his electors on his work and on the work of the Soviet of Working People's Deputies, and he is liable to be recalled at any time upon a decision of a majority of the electors in the manner established by law.

Art. 118. Elections of deputies to Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR are held by election districts on the following basis:

in elections to regional Soviets - one deputy for every 10,000 to 15,000 of the population, depending upon its size;

in elections to district Soviets - one deputy for every 1,000 of the population; in a district whose population does not exceed 25,000, twenty-five deputies are elected, and in a district whose population exceeds 60,000, not more than sixty deputies are elected;

in elections to city Soviets or city district Soviets - one deputy for every 250 to 1,000 of the population, depending upon its size; in a city or city district whose population does not exceed 12,000, thirty-five deputies are elected;

in elections to village or settlement Soviets - one deputy for every 100 of the population; in a village or settlement whose population does not exceed 1,000, nine deputies are elected, and where the population exceeds 2,500, not more than twenty-five deputies.

The basis of representation for each regional, district, city, village and settlement Soviet of Working People's Deputies is fixed in the Ordinance Concerning Elections to Regional, District, City, Village and Settlement Soviets of Working People's Deputies of the Belorussian SSR, within the range of the bases of representation indicated in the present article.

7: Krushinsky - 1 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

Belorussian Communism and Nationalism -- Personal Recollections

S. Krushinskii

Introduction: 1917-1920

668 The February Revolution of 1917 must be considered the turning point in the history of the Belorussian national movement. From the first days of the revolution there took place throughout all of Belorussia, especially in the future capital, Minsk, various congresses, conferences, and meetings in which, besides discussion of special questions, the problem of the future destiny of the area and its state structure occupied a position of by no means minor importance. All along the enormous front, in Petrograd, the Baltic Fleet, the Black Sea Fleet, in Odessa, and in other places, Belorussian officers and soldiers organized their own national committees and unions in, as it were, an answering echo to the activities in the homeland. Belorussians on the front were very interested in the political doings at home. Subsequently most of those who had organized committees at the front occupied prominent positions in national work at home.

Post-revolutionary events and the national questions raised by the masses required solutions and the acceptance of some kind of decisions. Searching for a solution, the political leaders of the time came to the conclusion that only a congress of delegates elected by the whole nation would be authorized properly to determine the form of the state structure of Belorussia, and likewise to resolve the most pressing post-revolutionary questions.

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642 The First All-Belorussian Congress convened in Minsk from the eighteenth to the thirty-first of December, 1917. Of the delegates present 1,167 had a deciding voice and 705 a consultative voice. However the Congress did not finish its work and on December 30th was dispersed by armed units of Bolsheviks. The Congress passed on its powers for the conduct of further work to the Rada of the Belorussian National Republic, then and there elected at the Congress. The Rada chiefly utilized the underground to carry on its work under the difficult conditions of war and the Bolshevik terror. In its session of March 25, 1918, the Rada passed a resolution of historic importance for the Belorussian nation, known as the Manifesto of March 25. In the Manifesto it was stated that "Belorussia declares itself to be an independent National Republic."

648 refuge on Soviet territory, and meanwhile Soviet propaganda interpreted the "exploits" of Mukha and other units as the anger of the Belorussians nation against capitalist Poland. From the B. S. S. R. special propagandistic literature was sent into western Belorussia, as were Communists prepared for underground work who carried on propaganda there as well as organizing Communist and Komsomol cells. Nor did the Poles remain in their debt. They also organized units and forays into the territory of Soviet Belorussia where they ravaged the revisional committees and the village soviets, in some cases not disdaining to conduct pogroms of the Jews. The raids which were made upon the towns of Kopyl' and Koydanov in the Minskaya oblast' are well known . . .

668 The destructive war and the Bolshevik terror greatly weakened the national forces of Belorussia. A significant part of the active political workers who had taken part in the all-Belorussian Congress and in the further work of creating an independent National Republic were forced to emigrate across the border. /3/ Only a few individuals remained in Belorussia and their number was somewhat augmented by those who returned from the front. At the time, the national-democratic intellegentsia estimated the political situation correctly. The Kremlin and Poland were pursuing their own political ends, which were completely foreign to the interests of the Belorussian nation. Warsaw had set itself the goal of turning Belorussians into Poles in the shortest possible period. And Moscow had destined Belorussia to be a convenient ground for the preparation of its own specific measures towards the quickest possible Communist revolution in the West and as a first step in neighboring Poland. Belorussian national forces could not reconcile themselves to such a destiny for their country. Immediately after the Soviet-Polish War there were attempts to preserve their independence by armed force. The famous Slutskiy uprising broke out in the end of 1920; more than ten thousand fighters for freedom and liberty took part in it. The Slutskiy uprising was quelled by the overwhelming strength of the Red Army. Belorussia was then covered with a thick net of partisan units, some of which resisted until as late as 1930. A correct appraisal of the situation led the Belorussian national leaders to the decision to elect the path of lengthy, painstaking, and patient work within the B. S. S. R., involving the elevation of the national consciousness of the masses and the preparation of young cadres for active work. When the Bolsheviks were forced to give up

●668 'War Communism' which brought with it hunger and disorganization, and enter upon the New Economic Policy, many were filled with hopes of a regeneration of the Soviet power...

Editors Note: the sub-titles of this article are in English in the original Russian text. They have been copied here, except for any reference to the Ezhovshchina which is spelt Yezhovshchina in the original and which we spell Ezhovshchina.

Educational Campaign in Belorussia

Professor Vsevolod Ignatovskii played a leading role in the Belorussian national movement. He was the People's Commissar of Public Education of the BSSR (1). A group of archive nationalists united around Professor Ignatovskii with whom a whole series of cultured and prominent public figures sympathized and who aided in the national work, although for various reasons they did not want to become openly involved. In the first place, it was necessary to bring out the nationally thinking intelligentsia which had been dispersed throughout the farthest corners of the province, having been driven from the cities in search of food during the time of famine in the cities. It was necessary to open and organize upper and middle s schools /4/ and prepare the youth for work in all fields of the national economy and culture. The narrow circle of leaders of the movement arrived at what seems at first sight to have been a strange conclusion: not to obstruct conscious young members of the intellegentsia from entering the Communist Party, even to suggest the idea and in some cases compel them to become Party members. It was considered that Belorussians, especially the intellegentsia, in the Party, would the more quickly reach leading positions in the Party and the administrative apparatus, and it was supposed that the national aims would be realized sooner and more successfully through the Party.

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1. At first V. Ignatovskii was for a short while the People's Commissar of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R. of his biography in the Literaturnaya Entsiklopediya /Literary Encyclopedia/ by the Communist Academy, 1930, p. 417.

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668 214 The People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia /Narkompros/ became the headquarters of activity. Here follows a short schematic description of the most important measures taken up until 1930. The Narkompros took measures to have the instruction in all schools translated into the native language. This was difficult work since the schools did not have textbooks in the native language, the lack of elementary readers in the primary schools being a particularly difficult obstacle to overcome. However in a comparatively short period old and experienced teachers compiled some elementary readers modeled upon the literary styles of Belorussian writers, and a famous Belorussian linguist compiled a school grammar of the native language (1).

1. Ia. Lesik compiled a school textbook of the Belorussian language; the first normative grammar of Belorussian on a scientific basis, adapted simultaneously for use in schools had been issued in 1918 by the Belorussian philologist, V. Tarashkevich, long before Lesik.

The majority of the presses in Belorussia had been destroyed during the war and in any case, they were not suitable for mass publication of textbooks. During the course of a year some textbooks were printed in Germany and a few in Wilno under the direction of the well known writer D. Zhilunovich who was a member of the collegium of Narkampros. He subsequently reorganized the publishing business and the presses in Minsk. With contemporary techniques, the work which he accomplished would not seem to be very great, but in those times, against a background of general devastation, it was quite an accomplishment.

871 666 Normal schools were opened in Minsk and a number of other cities. The one in Minsk played a particularly positive role. It was staffed with the best teachers, and during the twenties was named after Professor Ignatovskii. The education in these normal schools was directed toward the preparation of teachers who were also politically active nationalists. Their graduates subsequently devoted themselves, with great success, to the cultural rebirth of their nation. /5/ Many of them finished universities, and out of the former pupils of the Minsk normal school there developed a number of talented poets and writers. To fill the great lack of teachers of

668 the Belorussian language one-year courses were made available in
871 the secondary schools. These courses remained available, as a provisional measure, for all, up to regular graduates of the pedagogical department of the Belorussian University. Taken all together these measures made it possible as early as the beginning of the academic year of 1924, to change the curriculum to the native language in schools, kindergartens, adult evening schools, and stations for the liquidation of illiteracy.

563 Parallel with the Belorussianization of the schools Narkompros[1]
871 took practical steps to guarantee their own languages to the schools of the national minorities. The work among the Jewish population was particularly successful. The special Jewish inspectors of Narkompros, and in the neighboring towns as well, worked intensively to open schools, kindergartens, orphan homes and libraries for the Jewish population. This great task was not always accomplished smoothly, and thus aroused some dissatisfaction against the zealous promulgators of the national policy. Under the new system parents did not have a free choice of schools for their children; besides, in the cities and especially among the Jewish intelligentsia, only Russian was spoken in the family, and the children experienced great difficulty in learning Hebrew when they got to the Jewish national schools. Then, in addition, after completing a Jewish secondary school they had a very limited choice of higher schools for further education. A thorough knowledge of Russian was necessary to pass the entrance examinations into an institution of higher learning outside Belorussia, and in the Belorussian university itself there was only one Jewish subdivision (section) in the educational department where the lectures were given in Hebrew. Therefore some parents went to work in the R.S.F.S.R. or sent their children to school there, and thus the Jewish secondary schools, especially the upper classes, were not full, having three to five pupils in a class. Nevertheless the work accomplished was great and fully responded to the national feelings of the masses among whom Zionistic tendencies still existed. Among the special normal schools in Belorussia were the pedagogical academy in Gomel' which had instruction in Hebrew, and the agricultural technical school in Kurasovshchina, not far from Minsk. Jewish children were fully assured of having seven-year schooling and even secondary schooling in some cities. Homeless orphans were collected in Jewish orphan asylums, and there were a sufficient number of kindergartens. /6/

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

423 the land was hereditary property, which had the positive results of
continual and steady use of the land and the negative one of constant
subdivision of the peasant holdings in the country. The Bolshevik
uprising did not bring about any significant improvements in the life
of the small holders as sovkhozes and kolkhozes were organized on
the large estates. Up until 1930, D. Prishchepov, a former Socialist-Revolutionary,
was the head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture.
He had managed to live abroad and become acquainted
with agricultural conditions in Denmark and Germany. Upon his return
to Belorussia he contemplated a series of measures which he considered
the more useful since they were in accordance with the desires
of the great mass of the Belorussian peasantry. So as to increase
the land fund and distribute it among those who had little or none,
Prishchepov managed to abolish a part, although an insignificant one,
of the Soviet farms and also to bring about significant reductions in
the land belonging to these establishments. As the basic unit of land to
be used, Prishchepov chose the small village of ten to twenty peasant
farms, with comfortable farmsteads of up to one hectare in size. /11/
[311] Even in those times it cost him[1] a great effort to prove the advantage of
the small village over the large one as a method of land exploitation.
The necessity of rapid reconstruction of the system of land tenure in
Belorussia was obvious. In the first place there was the question of
what to do with the reserve land which had been given for temporary
use to the landless peasants and those with small holdings. Then, it
was proposed to apportion crowded and disorganized large villages
among small ones. Part of the peasantry wanted small separate farms
under the new system, but Prishchepov could not officially establish
separate farmsteads. In practice it happened as an exception that,
when lands were being distributed in the woods, separate farms were
● 668 cut out as well as small villages. . . To placate the theoreticians,
Prishchepov[1] had to assure them that it was very easy to make the
transformation from a small village to an agricultural commune.
Prishchepov knew quite well how absurd these assurances were, but
being one of the leaders of the national movement he was guided by
the interests of the country and not by the presuppositions of the
654 Communists which at the time were both unclear and confused. In
addition to increasing agricultural assistance Prishchepov[1] introduced
a series of measures designed to encourage improvements on the holdings
of independent peasants. Various types of agricultural exibition

[1] [D. Prishchepov, head of the National Commissariat of Agriculture, beginning about 1920 to 1930 - Analyst]

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Only toward the end of 1926, after the most persistent petitioning in the Kremlin, and at that time petitioning had not yet become perilous, the question of uniting the Gomel'Guberniya to the B. S. S. R. was raised. However M. Kalinin himself, the President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., came out sharply against unification. The Kremlin was forced to resort to a peculiar sort of plebiscite in order to refute the pretensions of the Belorussians. It organized a special commission with the Latvian, Peters, as president, which was to determine on the spot what language was spoken by the inhabitants of Gomel' Guberniya. It was decided that the population had forgotten its language and finally become Russified. No research was undertaken to determine where the population belonged ethnologically. The commission traveled around the sizable territory of the Gomel' Guberniya using the following method for its investigations: upon arriving in some inhabited place and meeting the peasantry, the members would enter upon some sort of unofficial conversation. This was taken down in shorthand, and an analysis of the notes refuted the calculations of those who had opposed the inclusion of Gomel' Guberniya in the B. S. S. R. The real reasons for the opposition to having the Guberniya transferred were of an economic nature. Gomel' Guberniya is very rich in various raw materials, especially high quality forests which are so situated that transportation of the wood is very convenient. It is criss-crossed in many directions by railroad lines and convenient water routes. A well equipped match industry is centered there, one which at that time was the most active in the U. S. S. R., and there is a paper industry in Dobrush. Obviously it was not intended that the economy of the B. S. S. R. be strengthened at the expense of that of the R. S. F. S. R. This is confirmed by the fact that such industrial centers as Zlynka, Novozybkov, Klintsy, and Starodub, all within twenty or thirty kilometers of Gomel', were not given to the B. S. S. R., simply because some match factories and other manufacturing are located there. The fact of the unification itself passed unnoticed by the masses. Gomel' Guberniya was included in the B. S. S. R. without the customary fanfare and pomp. /13/ The Belorussian nationalist circles were faced with new problems. It was indispensible to take all measures to include the new territory with its Belorussian population within the general scope of operations as quickly as possible, and, moreover, this transitional process had to be accomplished very carefully and painlessly. It all

668 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official
191 languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized
by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach,
who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

563 Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in
[692] Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population.
In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

557 665 called a 'vydvizhenets' /promoted worker/. Generally such workers
were appointed as deputies of various kinds; independent work was
not given to them /16/ because of their non-Party status and the
fear of distortions in the Party line . . . To tell the truth they often
had to sail with the wind, orient themselves according to Party workers,
and compromise with their convictions, especially in settling peasant
668 problems. The leaders of the Belorussian national movement made
use of this well-advertised and all-embracing campaign[1] to send out
their best propagandists for further work in planting the Soviet state
apparatus "in the soil" and especially to select vydvizhenets workers /for
their own ends/. It would be possible to mention many successful
vydvizhenets, as examples. For instance in the Slutskiy Okrug, the
peasant vydvizhenets Fedorovich enjoyed unquestionable authority,
occupying the post of deputy president of the okrug executive committee. The peasant vydvizhenets Dubovtsev made such a favorable
impression with his work that as a result he even became Deputy
President of the Belorussian Supreme Soviet. He possessed the necessary
qualifications in administrative work, was modest both in his personal
life and on the job, and a promoter of the national work. Part of the
vydvizhenets group returned to their former jobs in the kolkhozes and
factories, and a very insignificant portion entered the Party.

647 The official organs which had the job of guiding the national work were the so-called National Commissions in the center and the district centers. The staff of a National Committee was composed of representatives of the separate nationalities. However they had no practical or organizational significance. The work was carried on outside their auspices and without their guidance. It was almost a dead superstructure of which there were and are many in the Soviet system.

Belorussians in Poland

661 565 Everything done by the nationalists in the B. S. S. R. had a colossal influence upon the Belorussians, especially upon the youth and intelligentsia, living in western Belorussia, which was under Polish rule. There they had no right even having been deprived of the right to acquire property. Without renouncing its nationality the intelligentsia could not find work. The Belorussian primary and high schools were closed, although they were

[1] [To raise the morale of the peasants caught in an unfavorable economic situation. Cf, p. 17, cat, 116--Analyst]

667 Afterwards he put a lot of work into organizing the Institute of Belorussian Culture and later was President of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences. In Odessa on January 13, 1919, Nekrashevich was careless enough to greet the French general, Bartel, in the name of the Belorussians. This became known in Minsk and when the National-Democrats were being dispersed, S. Ia. Vol'fson in his work against them, Ideologiia i Metodologiia Natsdemovshchiny, /The Ideology and Methodology of the National-Democrats/ wrote, "S. Nekrashevich welcomed General Bartel in Odessa, 'On behalf of the National Center of Belorussia, as the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in the South of Russia, who bring us not only the hope but, I would say, the guarantee of a speedy liberation from the oppressions of the Bolsheviks who for more than fifteen months have been devastating our country' ... Nekrashevich begged General Bartel for armed assistance." (pages 69-70)

Belorussia became Soviet; Belorussians and Odessites, returned to Minsk, and the majority of them held responsible positions. The welcome Nekrashevich had extended to General Bartel was not forgotten, however, but was unearthed from the archives and figured on every occasion as a shining example of the political untrustworthiness not only of himself but of the whole group of "Odessites." The calculations of the Belorussians were not justified. His appointment to Gomel' did not save him from the G.P.U. He was arrested before he even started work there, condemned, and sentenced to work out his term of punishment on Medvezh'ja Gora near the construction of the White Sea Canal. Evidently Balitskii died there since we have no more information about him. His wife's death was also tragic. Being a doctor of medicine she was not arrested but later went insane.

Zhilunovich and the "Nats-Dems" /24/

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668 The Belorussian State Publishing House played a prominent role in the national work. It was the only institution of this kind in Belorussia and issued all printed matter with the exception, of course, of newspapers and periodicals. This publishing house also regulated the priority of everything else published. It was headed by the outstanding Belorussian writer and politician of the older generation, Dimitrii
669 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartny).

668 Zhilunovich (who used the pseudonym Tsishka Gartnyi). Evidently it was a lot harder to square accounts with him, since he was the organizer of the B. S. S. R. and the first president of its government; Stalin knew him personally as he was Commissar of Nationalities when Soviet Belorussia was being organized. However, Zhilunovich was removed from the directorship of the press even though he was left in the Party.
668 The fate of the creator[1] of the B. S. S. R. is tragic and instructive.
661 Coming from a workingman's family in the revolutionary town of Kopyl', Minsk Guberniya, his life was difficult and eventful. Unlike other remote towns, Zhilunovich's birthplace distinguished itself by the organized revolutionary activity of its population. This is witnessed by the fact that in 1905 the government had to detail a whole company to this locality to preserve order. In those days it was possible to meet representatives of all the revolutionary parties here -- Socialist-Revolutionaries, Social-Democrats, Narodniks, and a rather large number of Bundists. Zhilunovich spent his childhood and early years in this revolutionary environment, working as a tanner; later he went to big cities like Riga and St. Petersburg. In 1917 he was immersed in revolutionary activity up to his ears, he even laid aside his writing. During the NEP, while the Soviet power was becoming stabilized in Belorussia, simultaneously, significant successes were being attained in the national work. Zhilunovich, and other nationalists with him, drew some erroneous conclusions and committed a series of political mistakes. A convinced democrat and nationalist, he put a high value on the culture and way of life of the West. He admired the order and organization of German life, where he had spent more than a year while directing the printing of textbooks for Belorussian schools. He sincerely believed that the B. S. S. R. was going to be a national, democratic republic. Many of the Belorussian politicians of the time shared this mistaken view and Moscow made use of it. Zhilunovich was entrusted with the mission of "persuading" Belorussian emigrants, and especially former members of the government of the Belorussian National Republic, to give up their mandates from the /25/ Belorussian Congress and return to Minsk where they would be given responsible posts. Not yet experienced in the Kremlin's methods a number of eminent Belorussian politicians listened to these persuasions and returned to their homeland. They were all subsequently liquidated by the G. P. U.

In 1926, Zhilunovich was one of the initiators and organizers of the Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography

[1] [Dimitri Zhilunovich - Analyst]

268 LL/ and alphabet. Many Belorussian emigrants came from abroad to be present at it . The brigade of the Marxist-Leninist department of the philological section of the Belorussian Academy of Sciences, in exposures of National-Democracy, writes about the Conference as follows, "The Academic Conference for reforming the Belorussian orthography and alphabet was in fact an open demonstration by National-Democratic counter-revolutionary forces - those in the B. S. S. R. as well as those who were abroad at the time and came to the Conference from their emigration -- Lastovskii, Ezovitov, Zhilka, Golovinskii, and others" (pages 110-111). In the hall where the Academic Conference was held there were no portraits of the leader, no Soviet flag, and naturally no propagandistic slogans of any kind. All this was possible, of course, in 1926, when they were trying to show the Belorussian emigrants that cultural activity in the B. S. S. R. has no connections with political affairs. Zhilunovich paid dearly for all this, from 1930 until his very death. Everything was brought up against him, and in 1933 he was expelled from the Party during the purge. At the end of 1936 or the beginning of 1937, he was arrested. He went out of his mind from the tortures and torment of cross-examination and was sent to Mogilev to the prisoners' division of a hospital for the mentally ill. There he either died or was poisoned. In the same year, one of his admirers, peculiarly enough a chief of the regional militia, secretly tried to find out where this martyr was buried. But the G. P. U. is good at hiding its tracks and the search met with no success whatsover.

Mass Arrests in Minsk --1930-1931

LL/ Mass arrests took place in Minsk in the middle of 1930. The provinces escaped almost unscathed, but prominent Belorussian cultural figures were arrested from the Academy of Sciences, the University, the Narkompros, and some in the Narkomzem /People's Commissariat of Agriculture/. Among those arrested was People's Commissar of Agriculture Prishchepov's deputy, Aleksandr (Ales') Adamovich -- and "Odessite" like Balitskii and Nekrashevich. While still a youth he had participated ardently in the work of the Bobrujsk Uyezd, Minsk Guberniya. /26/ After several years his ardor cooled, and in about 1925 he became a zealous nationalist. To his confederates, Adamovich whole-heartedly and sincerely confessed and repented that during the first years of his Soviet work,

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

575 641 sport and defence organizations, cultural, technical and scientific societies; and the most active and politically conscious citizens in the ranks of the working class and other sections of the working people unite in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), which is the vanguard of the working people in their struggle to strengthen and develop the socialist system and is the leading core of all organisations of the working people, both public and state.

[694] Art. 102. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person. No person may be placed under arrest except by decision of a court or with the sanction of a procurator.

Art. 103. The inviolability of the homes of citizens and privacy of correspondence are protected by law.

Art. 104. The Belorussian SSR affords the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the working people, or for their scientific activities, or for their struggle for national liberation.

Art. 105. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to abide by the Constitution of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, to observe the laws, to maintain labour discipline, honestly to perform public duties, and to respect the rules of socialist intercourse.

[421] [685] Art. 106. It is the duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR to safeguard and strengthen public socialist property as the sacred and inviolable foundation of the Soviet system, as the source of the wealth and might of the country, as the source of the prosperity and culture of all the working people.

Persons committing offences against public socialist property are enemies of the people.

Art. 107. Universal military service is law.

Military service in the armed forces of the USSR is an honourable duty of the citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

[687] Art. 108. To defend the fatherland is the sacred duty of every citizen of the Belorussian SSR. Treason to the country -- violation of the oath of allegiance, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, espionage -- is punishable with all severity of law as the most heinous of crimes.

Chapter IX. The Electoral System

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Art. 74. The Departments of city Soviets of Working People's Deputies of Baranovichi, Bobruisk, Borisov, Brest, Vileika, Vitebsk, Gomel, Grodno, Lida, Moghilev, Mosyr, Molodechno, Orsha, Pinsk, Polotsk, Rechitsa and Slutsk are subordinate in their activities both to the Soviets of Working People's Deputies of these towns and their executive committees as well as to the corresponding department of the regional Soviet of Working People's Deputies directly.

Art. 74a. The Departments of the city Soviet of Working People's Deputies of Minsk are subordinate in their activities both to the city Soviet of Workers' Deputies of Minsk and its Executive Committee as well as to the corresponding Ministry of the Belorussian SSR directly.

631 Art. 75. On the expiration of the terms of office of the regional, district, city, settlement or village Soviets of Working People's Deputies, their executive and administrative organs retain their powers until the newly elected Soviets shall have formed new executive and administrative organs.

Chapter VI. The Budget of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic

652 646 Art. 76. The state budget of the Belorussian SSR is drawn up by the Council of Ministers of the Belorussian SSR and submitted by it to the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for its approval.

[645] Upon its approval by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is published for general information.

Art. 77. The Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR elects a Budget Commission, which reports its conclusions on the state budget of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet.

Art. 78. The report on the fulfilment of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR is approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR and published for general information.

652 631 Art. 79. The budgets of the regional, district, city, settlement and village Soviets include the revenues from the local economy, deductions from the state revenues collected within their territory and likewise receipts from local taxes and imposts in amounts fixed by the laws of the USSR and the Belorussian SSR.

Chapter VII. The Courts and the Procurator's Office

● 692 Art. 80. In the Belorussian SSR justice is administered by the Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR, the Regional Courts, the Special Courts of the USSR established by decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and the People's Courts.

[693] Art. 81. In all Courts cases are tried with the participation of people's assessors, except in cases specially provided for by law.

Art. 82. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is the highest judicial organ of the Belorussian SSR. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is charged with the supervision of the judicial activities of all the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR.

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

692 Art. 83. The Supreme Court of the Belorussian SSR is elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Belorussian SSR for a term of five years.

Art. 84. Regional courts are elected by regional Soviets of Working People's Deputies for a term of five years.

Art. 85. People's courts are elected by the citizens of the district on the basis of universal, direct and equal suffrage by secret ballot for a term of three years.

695 [563] Art. 86. Judicial proceedings in the Belorussian SSR are conducted in the Belorussian language, persons not knowing the language being guaranteed every opportunity of fully acquainting themselves with the material of the case through an interpreter and likewise the right to use their own language in court.

Art. 87. In all courts of the Belorussian SSR cases are heard in public, unless otherwise provided for by law, and the accused is guaranteed the right to be defended by counsel.

693 Art. 88. Judges are independent and subject only to the law.

Art. 89. Supreme supervisory power to ensure the strict observance of the law by all Ministries and institutions subordinated to them, as well as by officials and citizens within the territory of the Belorussian SSR generally, is exercised by the Procurator-General of the USSR directly and also through the Procurator of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 90. The Procurator of the Belorussian SSR and the regional procurators are appointed by the Procurator-General of the USSR for a term of five years.

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Chapter VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens

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The right to work is ensured by the socialist organisation of the national economy, the steady growth of the productive forces of Soviet society, the elimination of the possibility of economic crises, and the abolition of unemployment.

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669 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

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191 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course
661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach, who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

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[692] Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population. In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

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9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

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661 been appointed Deputy President of the Sovnarkom of the B. S. S. R.

563 I consider it necessary to remark on the absurdity of some statements to the effect that the N. K. V. D. discriminated in favor of the Jews in making its arrests. Such statements are untrue and tainted with anti-Semitism. If the interested party were concerned with establishing the truth, he could find out from documents that all People's Commissars of the B. S. S. R., regardless of how proletarian their extraction, were arrested. The Commissar of the Communal Economy of the B. S. S. R., Wasserman, can serve as an example. During the Ezhovshchina he was arrested together with some others, and in prison went out of his mind. His wife was also arrested. The only one to escape arrest was the Deputy Commissar of the Food Industry, Evsei Paksin, and this was just an accident. The high ranking Jewish Party leaders did not escape either.

625 661 • [697] What went on in the rayons[4] was unspeakably horrible. The most primitive accomodations for thousands of people were hastily knocked together. In the city of Rogachevo prisoners were confined in the wintertime in a ruined old castle without stoves, doors or windows. The ruins were surrounded with barbed wire and by a guard. People died; an epidemic of typhus broke out, and the N. K. V. D. had to stop using the prison.

The inhabitants of the rayons adjacent to Poland were in excessively difficult straits as the N. K. V. D. border guard held sway there. Whole villages were emptied of their population. Everyone about whose reliability there was the slightest suspicion or who might have been suspected of being dissatisfied with the Soviet regime, was arrested. It can be stated without exaggeration that a good half of the male population suffered from the persecution. A 'troika's' had jurisdiction over the arrested, and the sentence was final and not subject to appeal. At night the condemned were carted away in trucks to be shot somewhere in the woods. /64/

As to the number of victims of the 1936-1937 terror we can judge by the following indices. Before the war Minsk had a population of about 250, 000, and at the height of the Ezhovshchina from four to five hundred were arrested in a night. At twelve o'clock when the "normal work" of the N. K. V. D. usually began, fear seized the city's population. People could not sleep but waited nervously for the knock and the rustling. There was panic

[4] [During the political purges 1936-1937- [illegible]]

625 661 in the apartments at the sound of an automobile in the street. Every family expected the dreaded visitors. Often in one family several persons were arrested. Fellow-workers in the various institutions, coming to work in the morning, looked around uneasily to determine the number of victims of the previous night. A person had to make superhuman efforts to maintain his outward calm and self-control at his work. He had to appear indifferent to the arrests of his close friends or people sharing his views. It was dangerous to show any interest in the prisoners or to ask about the fate of their families. The nerves of some who were still at liberty could not stand the strain. They did not lie down and go to sleep but got dressed and wandered aimlessly through the deserted streets of the city until morning. There was nothing to justify this behavior, but in the street one somehow felt more composed, and it was better than to wait for death in your own apartment. A person comforted himself with the fact that he would usually learn somewhat earlier if any fatal blow was being prepared for him. Many tried to be sent to distant, and if possible isolated, places. Anyone who could, tried to go to another oblast', another kray, far from any settled regions. There were cases of voluntary requests to be transferred to work in the Arctic Circle, Yakutiya, or the polar regions, of persons who signed contracts to work there -- in the hope of being saved from arrest. However these measures seldom were of any avail. Foresighted people would prepare a small parcel with laundry and some necessary articles in case they were to be arrested. The terror was heightened by rumors of the nightmarish conditions under which the prisoners were kept, tortures during the examinations, forced confessions. The prison cells were filled to overflowing; prisoners slept in shifts, all lying on one side so as to take up less room that way, and after a certain time, at a command, all turning over to lie on the other side.

697 661 Before being deposited in the cell, prisoners[1] were subjected to the most minute search; all watches, glasses, aids, bandages which sick people might have, and shoe laces were taken away; buttons were cut off trousers, jackets, overcoats, and buckles were taken off shoes. Particular care was taken to make sure that the prisoners did not keep anything metallic. Being deprived of glasses and bandages was, for those who were sick, a cause not only of discomfort /65/ but of pain. The former provincial and district prisons were altered during the Ezhovshchina.

[1] [Political prisoners of the 1936-1937 purge - analyst]

7: Krushinsky - 73 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

697 Windows were reduced in size by the three quarters and filled with
661 bricks, wooden shields being set in some, to make it impossible to see the jail yard or the side of the street or to see the outside world in general. In the yards of the prison special cages were constructed for the prisoners' walks, surrounded by a high board fence without a roof, into which they let prisoners. Special small cells were made, completely without windows, and the number of rooms of confinement of all kinds was increased. The prison shops were made over into cells for holding prisoners. The prisons were transformed into places for keeping people who were under investigation. Those convicted were sent to distant concentration camps. Rooms were kept strictly isolated one from another, but nonetheless news was not only quickly disseminated throughout the prison but even penetrated beyond the walls.

661 When the terror slackened a very insignificant part of the prisoners was set free. However, almost every one of them had been ruined in health: teeth had been knocked out, ribs broken, ear drums shattered, rectums injured from being forced to sit on the sharp point of a stool or chair leg. But the principal sickness was spiritual emptiness, and for many, bitter disillusionment, dejection, apathy. Those liberated who were not Party members returned to their former places of work, if they had not already been replaced by others. For this "forced" absence they were not reimbursed, even though Soviet labor law makes provisions for the individual's wages to be paid him by his employer if through no fault of his own he is unable to work. Many had been forced to sign an attestation that they would not divulge what they had seen and heard in the N. K. V. D., and this paralyzed any demand that their legal rights be protected which had
665 been mercilessly violated. Unenviable also was the lot of Party
661 members who were set at liberty.[1] They had to go through even more trouble to be reinstated in the Party. The very fact of arrest made the Party member an expellee. No doubt many of them would have been glad to remain outside the Party, but a person who had been expelled and made no effort at reinstatement was automatically put in an incomparably worse situation than that of any non-Party person. Leaders adopted a rather guarded attitude toward those who had been liberated from arrest. They were a source of fear and danger in the event of one of the possible twists of the Communist Party's unforeseeable and changeable policy.

[1] [After having been arrested during the 1936-1937 political purge - Analyst]

7: Krushinsky--16 G-4,5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

[062] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native
563 Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five
[798] percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish
563 language and were Belorussian by nationality. In the heyday of the
661 nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The
563 Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

701 students at the Minsk officers school were also recruited exclusively
543 from among Belorussians, /15/ and all the training as well as the commands were given in Belorussian. A special corps of specialists on Belorussia, with the experienced philologist, Baranovskii, as their leader, was selected for work in the officers' school. All the military regulations of the Red Army were translated into Belorussian. But the Belorussianization of these two divisions was sharply curtailed after 1930, the Belorussian specialists were fired from the officers school, and a significant number of them were subsequently arrested together with their leader. By 1932 no traces remained of the Belorussianization of these two territorial divisions, The Second Division, quartered in Minsk, had its name changed from Territorial to Experienced Regular Division, and the Belorussianization of parts of the Red Army was pronounced a harmful diversionary activity.

At one point, in order to strengthen the Soviet state, the
563 slogan of "going to the soil" was promoted in Belorussia. The main
647 reason for this was to fill the Soviet state apparatus with local workers independent of their nationality, and by this it was intended that the local Party workers, being native inhabitants of the area and knowing the language, customs, and way of life of the Belorussians, would be the more close to the national masses. However this campaign did not have any widespread success and was swallowed up by ensuing campaigns which were of a broader nature.

Propaganda among the Peasants

665 In 1924, a movement began in Belorussia under the noisy title of "Let's face the land," and it involved the mass dispatch of responsible workers from the centers into the rayon and village soviets for agitation and organizational work there. When the NEP had attained a steady tempo the peasantry found itself in a very
434 difficult situation. The prices of agricultural products were low and those of factory made products immeasurably high. For example, a peasant had to pay no less than 320 kilograms of grain for an ordinary Tula samovar. At the time the hard and reliable Soviet chervonets had acquired a solid position in the economy. But the peasants had no
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557 chervontsi . . . To raise the depressed mood of the peasantry propagandists were sent out for extended periods, and some of them were even left in the rayons for permanent work as responsible Party leaders. It was decided simultaneously to advance non-Party peasants and factory workers to responsible positions. Such a new worker was

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

642 Art. 16a. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has its own Republican [701] military formations.

Art. 16b. The Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic has the right to enter into direct relations with foreign states and to conclude agreements and exchange [848] diplomatic and consular representatives with them.

Art. 17. The laws of the USSR are binding within the territory of the Belorussian SSR.

[641] Art. 18. Every citizen of the Belorussian SSR is a citizen of the USSR.

Citizens of all other Union Republics enjoy on the territory of the Belorussian SSR equal rights with citizens of the Belorussian SSR.

Art. 19. The jurisdiction of the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, as represented by its higher organs of state power and organs of state administration, embraces:

a) Adoption of the Constitution of the Belorussian SSR and control over its observance;

b) Establishment of the boundaries, and of the division into districts, of regions; submission of the formation of new regions constituting part of the Belorussian SSR to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR for confirmation;

c) Legislation of the Belorussian SSR;

d) Maintenance of public order and safeguarding the rights of citizens;

e) Approval of the national-economic plan of the Belorussian SSR;

f) Approval of the state budget of the Belorussian SSR and of the report on its fulfilment;

g) Determination of state and local taxes, imposts and non-tax revenues in conformity with the laws of the USSR; direction of the fulfilment of the local budgets of the regions;

h) Direction of insurance and savings;

i) Administration of the banks, industrial, agricultural and trading enterprises and organizations subordinate to the Republic, as well as direction of local industry;

j) Control and superintendence of the condition and administration of enterprises subordinate to the Union;

k) Establishment of the procedure governing the use of land, mineral wealth, forests and waters;

l) Direction of dwelling houses and the municipal economy, dwelling house construction and the modernization of cities and other inhabited places;

m) Road building; direction of local transport and communications;

n) Labour legislation;

o) Direction of social maintenance;

p) Direction of elementary, secondary and higher education;

q) Direction of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of the Belorussian SSR, and administration of the cultural, educational and scientific organizations and institutions of all-Republican importance;

r) Direction of public health and administration of public health institutions of Republican importance;

s) Direction and organization of physical culture and sports;

t) Organization of the judicial organs of the Belorussian SSR;

u) Granting the rights of citizenship of the Belorussian SSR;

v) Amnesty and pardon of citizens convicted by judicial organs of

162 inhabitants numbered 4,983,240). The greatest increase had occurred in the towns, largely as a result of the growth of industry. From 1926 to 1939 the urban population of the B.S.S.R. rose from 847,830 to 1,372,522; while the numbers of rural inhabitants remained almost constant: 4,135,410 in 1926 as compared with 4,195,454 in 1939.

In the Soviet Union as a whole, the population had increased by 15.9 per cent., from 147 million in December 1926 to over 170 million in 1939. However, whereas the numbers living in towns had more than doubled (26 million to 55.9 million); the rural population had decreased from 120.7 million to only 114.5 million.

No census has been taken in the Soviet Union since the war; and the present population of the B.S.S.R. is not definitely known. In October 1939, after the incorporation of the ex-Polish regions, it was about 10,386,000 inhabitants.

The principal cities of Byelorussia with their 1939 populations are Minsk, the capital (238,772), Vitebsk (167,424), Gomel (144,169), Mogilev (99,440), and Bobruisk (84,107). As compared with 1926 the populations of all these towns had increased from 64 to 98 per cent. by 1939.

War Losses

721 On June 22, 1941, the German armies, supported by their satellites, attacked the Soviet Union on its 1,500-mile European front; and in the
727 early phase of the war, succeeded in overrunning the western Soviet Republics of Byelorussia and the Ukraine. For the second time in this century these areas were subjected to German occupation and devastation.

Lying directly in the path of the enemy advance towards Moscow, the Byelorussian Republic experienced terrible destruction. Just one month after the initial Nazi attack, the German News Agency announced that the Byelorussian town of Vitebsk (which the Nazis, according to their claim, had captured on July 11), had been "nothing but ruins when
727 occupied". As the war progressed, this bleak statement was to be true of most Byelorussian cities. In August 1941, according to an estimate by Allen and Muratoff,[1] the Germans were employing half their Panzer divisions and at least 40 per cent. of all their available forces in the Vitebsk-Smolensk-Mogilev sector.

Even after the Soviet Army retreat, Byelorussia continued to be a battle ground as Soviet guerillas carried on heroic warfare against the enemy occupying forces.

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1 The Russian Campaigns of 1941-43, Allen and Muratoff, Penguin Books, London, 1944.

GENERAL EDUCATION IN SOVIET BELORUSSIA

871 The development of Soviet schools in the Belorussian SSR during the first decade of Soviet rule took a somewhat different path from that in the other parts of the Soviet Union. Until 1921, Belorussia was an arena of wars and occupation, first German and then Polish. If the Council of Peoples Commissaries of the RSFSR decreed on August 21st, 1923, that the preparation of a project for general education should be undertaken, in the BSSR such a decree was issued only three years later, on April 7th, 1926. In the RSFSR lower and upper division schools were organized from the very beginning. In Belorussia the public schools adopted a seven year program which was separated into two divisions: the lower, comprising the first to fourth grades (the elementary school) and the upper, comprising the fifth to seventh grades. Technical schools of various specialties with four years of training included secondary education and paved the way to higher institutions of learning. The pernicious experiments of the State Learned Council of the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR affected the schools of Belorussia to a lesser degree. The People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR was headed by the intelligent pedagogue V. Ignatovskii, professor at the Teachers' Institute. His pedagogical experience and knowledge of public schools did not allow Professor Ignatovskii to take the road of careless school reforms. In 1929 he was accused [661] of national democratism, and committed suicide. In 1930, widespread arrests of educators took place. Several experienced pedagogues in the People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR were also arrested. After 1930, the original conservatism in matters concerning the schools of Belorussia was liquidated, and in the course of two to three years the schools assumed the monotonous Soviet form.

The Second World War quite definitely put an end to this chaotic educational regime in the Soviet schools and for many years [727] hampered the "completion" of general education. School affairs in Belorussia suffered particularly during the German occupation. Only through the great efforts and self-sacrificing work of Belorussian public workers and the local population, was it possible to arrange for work in schools and even to organize teachers' seminars during the war.

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127 Byelorussia was not liberated until the summer of 1944; and the Ukraine even later, in November 1944. Both were in ruins. At the end of the war in Europe these two Republics were acknowledged to be the most devastated areas of all devastated Europe. Nowhere else had the destruction been carried out in so thorough a manner and on so wide a scale. Whole cities and villages were demolished; great industries wrecked; and farms pillaged and burned. Millions of Byelorussian and Ukrainian citizens had been made homeless, and were camping in cellars, dugouts and caves.

Losses of population were enormous. Apart from army casualties, the numbered civilian dead in the two Republics was as much as 10 to 15 per cent. of the total populations. At the Minsk trial of German war criminals in January 1946, the indictment alleged that 2.2 million Soviet civilians and prisoners of war were exterminated in Byelorussia by the Germans. The indictment also declared that 380,000 people were driven from Byelorussia to Germany for forced labour. (Of those so deported, about 300,000 had been returned home by August 1946). Another estimate of lives lost in the war has been given by Mr. Ivan Tinchuck, the UNRRA member for the Byelorussian Republic, who stated that the Republic lost 1,386,000 persons (mostly women, children and old people). Most of these had been tortured and shot, hanged, burned or gassed to death. These figures do not include the Byelorussians in the Soviet Army who were battle casualties.

Some indication of the population losses and of the present population can be gathered from the fact that in the February 1946 elections, there were 4,043,284 voters in the B.S.S.R. out of the Soviet Union total electorate of 101,717,686. Thus the electorate of the B.S.S.R. was less than 4 per cent. of the total; whereas at the end of 1939 this Republic's population represented 5.3 per cent. of all the inhabitants of the entire Soviet Union. This year in Byelorussia the electorate attained to 4,435,919.

The material damage in Byelorussia was almost indescribable. The major cities had been destroyed, and 9,200 villages burnt. In them, the Germans had demolished over a million buildings, including state and cultural institutions, hospitals, schools, and dwellings. As a result of this destruction, three million people - nearly one-third of the population - lost all their personal belongings and their homes. Some indication of the destruction wrought in the towns is given in the following table.

TABLE I

War Destruction of Byelorussian Towns

	Population 1939	Population June 1946	Estimated percentage destruction
Minsk	238,772		80
Vitebsk	167,424	62,000	90 - 93
Gomel	144,169		80
Orsha	62,000[1]	34,000	80
Polotsk	30,000[1]	24,000	96
Borisov	88,000[1]	43,000	50

1 Population in 1940, according to UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia.

Sources: Statement by Mr. Ivan Tinchuk, UNRRA Member for the B.S.S.R., August 1945; and UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

According to the indictment of the Minsk trial of German war criminals, 1,136 hospitals, clinics and first aid centres were destroyed during the occupation. The civilian population received no medical services from the Germans during the war and the incidence of various diseases increased enormously. There was also a drastic increase in infant mortality.

Byelorussian industry has been systematically reduced to rubble. Everywhere the pattern of destruction was the same. Enterprises had been stripped of machinery, and the buildings burned or blown up. Stationary equipment was destroyed or rendered useless.

Agriculture and livestock breeding suffered equally. Millions of farm animals were slaughtered or taken to Germany. Ten thousand collective and state farms were plundered. From machine and tractor stations alone, 8,996 tractors and 1,105 combine harvesters were removed and taken to Germany. (By comparing these losses with the immediate pre-war numbers of 12,000 tractors and 1,600 combines, it can be seen what German occupation meant to mechanised farming in this Republic.)

The destruction of agriculture had severe consequences on the food situation. In May 1945 the Chief of the UNRRA Supplies Department in the Byelorussian Government stated that, while there was no actual
[262] starvation, there was serious undernourishment in many areas. UNRRA Mission observers reported that at that time the large majority of the people had little to eat beyond bread, potatoes and UNRRA food. The shortage of fats and oils was particularly acute; in the spring of 1945 the daily fat ration in children's homes was only 20 grams, compared with 100 grams before the war.

727 Reckoned in terms of 1941 state prices, the direct damage inflicted on the Byelorussian S.S.R. by the German military attack and the prolonged occupation has been placed at 75,000 million roubles (15,000 million U.S. dollars). This includes material losses due to destruction, damage, and plunder; and it represents 11 per cent. of the damage to the entire Soviet Union, which has been estimated at 679,000 million roubles.

The following table shows how Byelorussia's war damage has been assessed to the separate branches of the economy.

TABLE II

War Damage to the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic
(in million U.S. dollars)

Industry and building	1,263.84
Transport and communications	1,998.96
Housing and municipal economy	917.94
Agriculture	4,480.34
Commerce	141.22
Education	464.76
Arts	32.68
Public Health	122.12
State institutions	241.44
Co-operation	387.16
Public organizations	68.48
Religious communities	161.06
Personal property of citizens	4,720.00
Total	15,000.00

Note: Damage is estimated in terms of 1941 state prices: 75,000 million roubles, converted to dollars at the rate of 5 roubles equal one dollar. The present official rate is 5.40 roubles to the dollar.

Source: Statement by Mr. K.V. Kiselev, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Byelorussian S.S.R., published in the Soviet Monitor, London, February 8, 1947.

The Request for UNRRA Assistance

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648 Rehabilitation work in the B.S.S.R. commenced even before the war was ended. Great assistance was given by other areas of the U.S.S.R., but so many of the economically important regions of the Soviet Union had suffered destruction that the help which they could provide was limited.

Early in 1945 it became apparent that both Byelorussia and the Ukraine would need further external assistance if they were to carry on

727 648 the full tasks of rebuilding homes, restarting industry, and working their farms once more. Therefore, in the summer of 1945 the Soviet Government applied to UNRRA for such assistance and strongly urged that 700 million U.S. dollars be allocated by the Administration for relief work in these two Republics. In August 1945 the Ukraine and Byelorussia were admitted to membership in UNRRA; and on December 18, 1945, after it was determined that they were not in a position to pay with foreign exchange for their own import requirements, agreements were signed between their governments and the Administration providing for the delivery of relief and rehabilitation supplies amounting to 250 million dollars - little more than one-third of the amount requested.

The UNRRA agreement with Byelorussia provided that 61 million dollars would be used to ship food, clothing, medical, agricultural, and industrial supplies to the B.S.S.R. The agreement also stipulated that UNRRA would attempt to deliver the bulk of these supplies to Byelorussia before June 30, 1946; however, because of procurement and transport difficulties, this proved impossible. On May 30, 1946, therefore, the UNRRA-Byelorussian agreement was extended to the end of 1946.

On April 19, 1946, a small UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia and established headquarters at Minsk. The duties of the Mission were to handle problems connected with the delivery of UNRRA supplies, to work closely with the Byelorussian Government in ascertaining the needs of the people, and to observe the distribution of UNRRA supplies. As in all UNRRA countries, the Mission members have complete freedom of movement and observation.

Before the arrival of the Mission at Minsk, 29 ships carrying UNRRA cargoes had already landed at Soviet ports (from December 1945, when UNRRA shipments started, up to April 23, 1946). The Byelorussian Government estimated the tonnage received at 67,680 gross long tons, of which 58,000 tons were food; 3,939 tons, seeds; 3,905 tons, industrial materials; and 1,512 tons were clothing, soap, leather, tarpaulins, and rope. The government also reported that they had taken from the ports and distributed all but 22,000 tons of the supplies received by that time.

Members of the UNRRA Mission making initial observations reported efficient and equitable distribution of the supplies to those sections of the population which suffered most from the war. Practical use was being made of every scrap of material, and there was no evidence of waste. As at April 23, 1946, 40,000 gross long tons of food had been distributed among 12 regions and eight individual towns in Byelorussia. Eleven locomotives had been distributed to nine different points; industrial metals - copper, aluminium, and zinc - had been distributed in six of the war destroyed cities; and over 1,000 tons of seeds, to seven regions of the Republic.

648 262 It was in food supplies that UNRRA was making its greatest contribution. In all the shops, UNRRA food constituted the bulk of the supplies; and apart from bread, cereals, and potatoes, over 90 per cent.

648 of the Byelorussian diet came from UNRRA sources. Meat supplies from
262 domestic production were almost nil; fats and oils also were critically short; and little sugar was available, the Byelorussian sugar industry having been completely smashed.

Spring 1946: The Outlook

000 In Byelorussia, 1946 was expected to be a great year for recovery. The new Five Year Plan had just been adopted; UNRRA assistance was getting into full swing; and the relief supplies were filling a wide gap. The food situation was poor but, thanks to UNRRA help, not desperate. Material progress was being made; destroyed houses were being rebuilt, and farming and industry slowly restored.

121 The following sections of this report will try to tell a little of the story of Byelorussia before the war; indicate the damage inflicted by the German invaders and consider Byelorussian reconstruction as it progresses today.

Long Term Rehabilitation Plans

727 On March 18, 1946, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. adopted a
185 series of measures for the long-term rehabilitation of the Soviet Union. Incorporated in the fourth Five Year Plan (1946-1950), these measures were designed to rehabilitate the devastated regions of the country, to recover the pre-war level in industry and agriculture, and then considerably to surpass that level.

Included in the Plan are provisions for capital investments in the Byelorussian Republic of 6,950 million roubles in 1946-50;[1] of this 2,422 million roubles are to be spent for works under the jurisdiction of the Republic. While small in comparison to the 75,000 million roubles estimated war damage suffered by the B.S.S.R., this volume of capital investments is greater than the combined expenditures of 5,741 million made during the three pre-war Five Year Plans, (1928-42). Although some allowance must be made for the lower value of the rouble, the physical goals themselves are also greater.

The new plan contemplates great expansion, but no marked changes in the direction of Byelorussian economic development. Agricultural production is to be revived; and by 1950 the crop area is to be 5,300,000 hectares. Industrial plans for 1946-50 are largely centered in the development of electric power, and peat, brick and other building materials, all of which were well established before the war. One significant trend is toward the construction of more hydro-electric stations, which in 1950 will produce 12 per cent. of the total power, as compared to 1.6 per cent. in 1940. Peat briquette plants, prefabricated housing manufacture, and food processing plants are also to be launched. Except for the planned construction of factories to produce tractors and motor trucks - and these will be assembly plants rather than manufacturing ones - no heavy industry is to be established. The production of agricultural machinery will be a new feature in Byelorussian industry.

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[1] Capital investments for the whole Soviet Union in 1946-50 are fixed at 250,300 million roubles.

Also in the five year period, the major cities of Byelorussia are to be restored - particularly Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Bobruisk, Orsha, and Borisov. In all seven of these cities peat plants are to be rebuilt, and in most of them, brick plants and other industries such as porcelain works, clothing factories, tanneries, food processing plants, match factories, and agricultural machinery plants. Municipal and cultural services are to be restored, and housing is to be replaced. In the towns of the B.S.S.R. as a whole, 2.7 million square metres of state-owned housing space are to be made available for occupancy in the period 1946-50, including 650,000 square metres to be furnished by local soviets. An additional 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home owners assisted by the state loans.

In the sphere of cultural development, the number of schools in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is scheduled to be 11,375, with an attendance of 1.5 million. The number of hospital beds is to reach 30,000.

Considerable industrial expansion is also planned for the western regions of Byelorussia. According to the plan, these regions are to contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western area is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity in 1950. Other food processing factories are to be built, as well as a number of textile and clothing factories. Electric power stations are to be restored and new ones built, including hydro-electric stations. These are a major need in the western regions, which in 1938 had power facilities that supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland, and were undeveloped in comparison with the Soviet Byelorussia.

407 outbreak of the German attack, it was estimated that the B.S.S.R had 12,000 tractors, 1,500 combine harvesters, and 20,000 other agricultural machines.

Agricultural Development of Western Byelorussia

241 311 The arable area of the Byelorussian Republic was increased by about 3,597,000 hectares in 1939, when Western Byelorussia was rejoined to the Soviet Union. According to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, London, 1941, this territory in 1938 had 136,000 hectares under cultivation of wheat, 1,132,000 hectares under rye, 664,000 hectares under oats and barley, 518,000 under potatoes, and 60,000 hectares sown to flax.

241 423 Before the incorporation of the western territory into the B.S.S.R., its agriculture was primitive. Eighty to 90 per cent. of the population were engaged in agricultural work, and there was practically no mechanization. After 1939, however, many changes were made. The People's Assembly of Western Byelorussia declared all land, timber, and water resources to be the property of the state, (that is, public property);; and subsequently, 646,000 hectares of land were distributed among the poorer peasants, as well as 540,000 hectares taken from large estates and given to poor and middle-class farmers and to formerly landless hired men. Fourteen thousand hired men and poor peasants also received horses, and 33,400 households received cows.

474 [475] Many of the farmholdings were then organized into collectives; about 1,000 kolkhozes were formed in a short time, and over 100 machine and tractor stations erected. In 1940 these west Byelorussian M.T.S. had 1,500 tractors at their disposal - about 15 per cent. of all the tractors held by the M.T.S. of the Republic.

[727] The process of collectivization in Western Byelorussia was interrupted by the German occupation, which destroyed the Soviet system of land utilization, and at present the work of reorganization is not moving along very rapidly. By 1946 only about 100 collective farms, combining 2,802 individual holdings, had been reorganized and were again functioning; and this is but a small fraction of the peasant population in the western region. However, government officials state that no immediate pressure is being exerted to promote collective farms.

German Devastation of Agriculture

727 241 The German occupation from June 1941 until the summer of 1944 left Byelorussian agriculture exhausted and devastated. The enemy had destroyed 9,200 villages and more than 1,200,000 peasant holdings. Ninety-two state farms and about 10,000 collective farms had been plundered and destroyed. All the food processing plants had been blown up; and over 316 machine and tractor stations had suffered destruction and looting; from them the Republic lost 8,996 tractors, 1,105 harvester combines, and countless numbers of other agricultural machines which the Germans either wrecked or carried off to Germany.

727 Livestock was practically wiped out;[1] the Germans had confiscated
231 more than two million head of cattle, three million pigs, and three
million sheep and goats. A few cattle had been hidden away in the
woods and swamps. The only horses left were those which had been
either too old or too small for army use, and therefore discarded by
the German or Soviet armies. Most small livestock had disappeared,
and poultry and bees had vanished completely.

727 The land itself was in a terrible condition.[1] Orchards were
neglected; and drainage systems had been either deliberately ruined
241 to flood the land, or permitted to deteriorate. Crop areas had
sharply decreased, and yields fell drastically for want of fertilizers
433 and draught power to cultivate the land efficiently. The area of
cereals had fallen by 42 per cent., that of technical crops by 86 per
cent., and of potatoes, by 53 per cent. Crop rotation had been
completely upset, and grasslands ruined. Nearly 20 per cent. of
Byelorussian territory was literally a desert.

When the UNRRA Mission arrived in Byelorussia nearly two years after the liberation, agricultural conditions had not materially improved. In the course of a tour through eastern Byelorussia in June 1946, Mission members reported that "throughout the northeast region at least half the rural houses are destroyed." Some regions showed even greater destruction; in the Surazh region east of Vitebsk, only 661 houses remained in 1944 out of 10,136 pre-war dwellings. The town of Surazh itself had 1,395 buildings before the war, of which only three were standing in 1944. By June 1946 there were 150 buildings in the town, all newly built except the three mentioned.

In the Polotsk and Vitebsk oblasts (provinces) only 58 and 64 per cent. respectively of the pre-war crop areas were under cultivation in 1946, two years after the liberation. In 1945 the crop yields were only 25 per cent. of pre-war production. The UNRRA Mission stated: "The low yields and unplanted lands are largely due to lack of tractors and to the plough-land having become overgrown with woods and brush since 1941. A large proportion of cropland is reported to be now idle because of uncleared mines, trenches, gun emplacements, etc. In the Surazh region uncultivated battlefields total one-quarter of the pre-war 87,500 acres of crop land."

The Polotsk and Vitebsk provinces possessed before the war 115,000 horses and 2,290 tractors; and about 2 million acres of land were under cultivation. In 1946 only 24,000 horses and 760 tractors were available; and 40 per cent. of the cropland remained uncultivated.

000 Since the time of these observations UNRRA Mission members have made many more inspection tours throughout the Republic. Among the many places they have had opportunity to observe was the Lenin Collective Farm in the Minsk raion (district), which they visited in December 1946. Because the experience of this farm is fairly typical, a small part of its history is reproduced in the following paragraphs.

[1] [in The war period from June 1941 to The Summer of 1944--Analyst]

Destruction of the Lenin Collective Farm[1]

474 The Lenin Collective Farm consisting of three villages and one sub-village, comprises an area of 1,500 hectares situated about 30 kilometres south of Minsk. It was organized in 1930 with 100 households, which had increased to about 200 by the outbreak of the war. At present there are 172 households with a population of 572 persons, of whom 208 are workers. Of these workers, only 57 are men. This proportion is explained partly by the shortage of men, and partly by the fact that a number of men reside in the village but work off the farm. There are 150 school children, and the remainder of the population are pre-school children, aged persons, and invalids.

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727 During the German occupation, enemy forces were not situated in these villages; but punitive expeditions would come at intervals from Minsk, surround a village, and proceed to terrorise and kill the inhabitants. On at least one occasion the villages were bombed. The local people believe that the Germans were using the villages for target practice. In all, 177 people were killed during the war, of whom 20 were killed while fighting at the front, and the rest were civilians. Eight entire families were destroyed, and every family without exception suffered the loss of one or more members. Numerous children were orphaned.

The people remained on the farm during the first year of German occupation; then in the summer of 1942 they all fled to the forests - 70 leaving in a single day - and did not return to the farm until after liberation in 1944. Seventy-five members of the collective were partisans, in addition to those who served in the army.

The farm was thus completely abandoned for two years. The people returned late in the summer of 1944 to find their farm stripped of machinery, most of the barns and sheds burned, and nearly half of the dwellings destroyed. All the livestock not removed to the woods with the people had been either killed or driven off by the Germans before their retreat. The following losses were enumerated by the Collective Farm Chairman:

Dwellings. Seventy-two houses, including adjacent sheds; a clubhouse with accommodation for 160 people; and a large schoolhouse.

Barns and stables. Three large grain barns; three stables for horses; two stables for cows (120 animals capacity each); a pig shelter large enough for 150 animals; and a poultry farm with capacity for 260 hens.

Machinery and tools. Four tractors; three straw cutters; one silage cutter; two root cutters for making fodder; one clover thresher; one three-ton truck; and three narrow-row seeders.

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1 Report by Davis McEntire, UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, December 13, 1946.

474 727 The farmers had hidden their ploughs, harrows, and small implements so that these were available with which to begin farming again in 1944; but all the heavy equipment was lost. Livestock losses amounted to 500 cattle, 125 horses, approximately 1,000 pigs, and about 800 sheep and goats. The peasants had taken their horses into the forests, and of those, 40 were brought back at liberation. These 40 horses and four cows were the sum total of livestock on hand at liberation.

In 1944, owing to the lateness of the season and to lack of implements, seeds and livestock, the farmers were able to sow only a very small part of their land. Most of the area brought into cultivation that first year had to be spaded by hand, because there was no draught power. In 1945 the farmers succeeded in bringing half of their their cropland under cultivation, still substituting hand spading for ploughing to a considerable extent.

As stated earlier, the area of this collective is 1,500 hectares. About 200 lectares are in meadows, 69 hectares in woods, and 421 hectares in pastures, gullies, and roads. The pre-war crop area was 810 hectares, and in 1946, this had been largely restored, except for hops, but not the pre-war yields. The following table shows the areas of cultivation in 1945 and 1946.

TABLE V

241 474 Lenin Collective Farm, Minsk Raion, Byelorussian S.S.R.: Crop Areas in 1945 and 1946
(in hectares)

Grain	1945		1946	
Oats	125		155	
Barley	75		75	
Wheat	25		19	
Winter rye	nil		186	
Winter wheat	"		8.5	
Buckwheat	10		8	
Total grain		235		451.5
Potatoes	100		94	
Vegetables	20		14	
Lupin (sown with rye)	nil		(83)	
Lupin (for seed)	10		9	
Clover	nil		90	
Hops	"		2[1]	
Total area sown		365		660
Fallow		445		150
Total cropland		810		810

[1] Pre-war area of hopyard, 4.5 hectares

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

407 tractors in time for either the spring or the autumn ploughing season in 1946. The first shipment of UNRRA tractors arrived in the Republic in December. Altogether, UNRRA expects to deliver about 800 tractors. The Byelorussian Minister of Agriculture gave the Mission an estimate that 20,000 15-horsepower tractor units would be needed to reorganize farm work on an adequate level of mechanization.[1]

In speaking of the need for farm machinery in this Republic, the UNRRA Mission said: "It is important to recognize that Byelorussian farming is not a hand-tool agriculture. Rehabilitation and recovery here does not mean a better hoe - it means a better tractor. It means more combine threshers, more grain drills and mechanized equipment. Rehabilitation of agriculture here means re-establishment of the pre-war rate of mechanization of farms, which, in turn, will release labour for still more tractor factories and still more industrialisation. Byelorussian farmers spaded by hand 200,000 hectares (half a million acres) in 1945 and half that amount in 1946. Such labours do great credit to the industry of the farmers, but a hungry Byelorussia and a hungry world will not be fed by such primitive farming methods."

Farm Buildings

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362 By the end of 1946 enough housing had been repaired or built in the B.S.S.R. to enable 250,000 families (about 1.5 million people) to move from dugouts or caves into houses. Rural schools had also been transferred from dugouts to new premises. The Byelorussian newspaper Sovietskaya Byelorussia (issues of December 17 and 34, 1946) reported that 254,000 houses had been restored in rural areas since liberation. Eighty-two thousand had been rebuilt in 1944, 112,000 in 1945, and 60,000 in 1946, and 45,556 houses were still in process of construction. As at the end of 1946, 10,000 rural families (50,000 people) were still living in dugouts and caves.

Farm Manpower

464 Besides the deplorable housing situation, which contributes to lowered work efficiency, there is a great shortage of labour. Since the war it is women rather than men who constitute the main labour force on Byelorussian farms. UNRRA Mission observations in mid-1946 gave a ratio of four to six women to every man. In some sections, 80 to 90 per cent. of the workers were women. On one farm visited the labour force consisted of five men, 75 women, and 21 young boys and girls. A total of 43 men from this one farm had been killed during the war.

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[1] The 15-horsepower unit is the common method of computing tractor numbers. Most Soviet tractors are larger than 15-horsepower, but a 45-horsepower machine would be considered, for example, as equivalent to three tractor units. An editorial in Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, January 8, 1947, stated that the average output per 15-horsepower tractor in 1946 was 338 hectares of ploughing, sowing, harvesting, and threshing, which is 73 hectares higher than the average for 1945.

185 grain crop amounted to 119 million tons, and the target for 1950 is set
433 at 127 million metric tons. Production of potatoes in Byelorussia is
to increase by 6 per cent., and of flax by 31 percent.

Fishing

226 Before the war fishing was an important source of food supply in Byelorussia, where the many inland lakes and streams abound in pike, perch, bass, sandre, bream, and other fresh-water fish. Osweia Lake, a body of water about 3,500 acres in extent, produced some 500 tons of fish annually, when 50 men were engaged in year-round fishing. At that time the fishing collective at the lake employed nets measuring almost a mile in overall length; but today very little fishing is being done for lack of nets and other equiptment. Osweia is not an isolated example.

• [127] An extensive system of fish culture, including the stocking of fish and the addition of chemical fertilizers to assist plant growth in the lakes, was destroyed during the war. The Germans depleted available fish resources by discharging explosives under water to bring the stunned fish to the surface. Many young fish were exterminated by this method of explosive fishing, without regard to conservation. At present the system of fish culture in Byelorussia is being slowly reinstituted, but is handicapped by the lack of nets. UNRRA shipments of fishing gear have, however, contributed valuable assistance in this regard.

The new Five Year Plan provides that "by 1948, pond culture will be restored to pre-war proportions."

The fish catch in 1950 is expected to be 5,200 tons.

TABLE VIII

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B.S.S.R.: Industrial Output in 1932 and 1937
(in million roubles, 1926-27 prices)

	1932	1937
Metalworking	81[1]	233[1]
Chemical	43.9	106.7
Woodworking	115	201
Paper	18.5	42.1
Hosiery	29.6	117.3

[1] The output of the metalworking industry of the entire Soviet Union in 1932 and 1937 amounted to 9,410 million and 27,519 million roubles respectively.

Source: Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

The gross industrial output of the B.S.S.R. in 1937 was 1,926 million roubles, as compared with 1,018 million in 1932 and only 116 million in 1913. In the Soviet Union as a whole, gross industrial output was 95,532 million roubles in 1937 as compared with less than half that amount (or 43,343 million roubles) in 1932.

Industrial Development of Western Byelorussia

Of the twelve oblasts which today comprise the Byelorussian Republic, five (Baranovichi, Brest, Pinsk, Grodno, and Molodechno) are in the western areas which were a part of Poland between 1920 and 1939. In 1939, when these oblasts rejoined the B.S.S.R., nearly 90 per cent. of their population was employed in agricultural work. The level of industry, as well as of agriculture, was very primitive, the yearly per capita industrial output being only 48 roubles, compared with 400 roubles per person output in the Byelorussian Soviet Republic. Despite the fact that in the western areas 88,000 hectares were under cultivation of flax in 1939, there were no flax mills in operation; whereas the B.S.S.R. by that time had 70 flax mills at work.

To overcome the relative backwardness of the western region and to assist the mechanization of agriculture, the Soviet Government invested 726,400,000 roubles there in 1940. In the period between incorporation and the German attack in June 1941, some increase in industrial output was achieved. For example, the match factory at Pinsk trebled its output.

727 Grodno, an important town in the western area, before the war had a bicycle plant, agricultural machinery works, a tobacco factory, lime works, and a shoe factory, all of which were demolished during the war. Brest, formerly named Brest-Litovsk, was a city of importance with a streetcar and sewer system and river traffic on the Bug. In August 1946,

727 when visited by UNRRA Mission observers, Brest was found to be about 50 percent. destroyed, and with a population estimated at 35 to 40 thousand, making it no more than the sixth city in size in the B.S.S.R. Baranovichi, also visited by UNRRA observers in August 1946, was found half demolished and with a population of 20,000. The municipal economy had been so little developed in Baranovichi that the Oblast Soviet Chairman, speaking before the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet as a Deputy in September 1946, asked that five million roubles be allocated in the Five Year Plan for the construction of a water works and sewer system in the city.

438 185 During the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, considerable industrial expansion is planned for the western oblasts. If the Plan is fulfilled, they will contribute about one-fourth of the Republic's total industrial output in 1950.

Among the new industries scheduled for construction in the western areas is a sugar refinery of 6,000 tons annual capacity, to be located in the Grodno oblast. In the city of Grodno will be built a woollen cloth factory which, together with a new factory to be constructed in Minsk, will produce 1.6 million metres of woollens in 1950. At Lida in Baranovichi oblast is to be founded a rubber shoe-sole factory which by 1950 is to produce half the requirements of the B.S.S.R.'s shoe industry. A sheepskin overcoat factory is to be built at Pinsk. New bread factories are to be put in operation in Grodno, Brest, and Pinsk; a food concentrates plant will be built at Lida; and the meat-packing plant at Baranovichi is scheduled for restoration.

377 185 Electric power stations are to be restored in Grodno and Brest, while new ones will be built in Baranovichi, Lida, Pinsk, and Molodechno. Hydro-electric stations will be constructed also, among them a station on the Shar river at Slonim and a larger station of 7,000 kilowatts at the Vileia waterfall in Molodechno oblast. As has been stated earlier, electric power facilities are a major need in the western oblasts, which in 1938 supplied only 0.5 per cent. of the electricity in pre-war Poland.

508 Also to be built at Brest is one of the Republic's three largest airports; the other two to be in Gomel and Minsk.

German Destruction of Industry

727 The destruction of Byelorussian industry by the Germans during the war was savage, systematic, and complete. At the Minsk trial of war criminals in January 1946 it was charged that the Germans had demolished or transferred to Germany the buildings and equipment of 10,338 of the B.S.S.R.'s industrial enterprises. The methods employed for this destruction were identical throughout the Republic.

In Minsk, for example, the industrial enterprises had been turned over to four or five German firms (Borman, Schorowa Werk, Trebotz, Schlachthof, and Trol), which carried off to Germany or to German-occupied territories, all the equipment and machinery which was of any

727 value; the Germans then proceeded either to blow up the buildings or raze them to the ground. They thus destroyed 23 of the largest factories, the railway-car repair works, the machine-tool plant, the "Prolstari" glass factory, two brick kilns, the "Cdermik" scales manufacturing plant, the meat-packing plants, eleven bakeries, confectionery and biscuit factories, the knitted-goods mills, and the "October" and "Krupskaya" garment factories.

In their inspection tours of the B.S.S.R., UNRRA Mission observers have noted wide-scale devastation and plunder everywhere; the most severely devastated areas being the northeast and central sections of the Republic. After a visit to northeast Byelorussia, Mission members reported that they had not seen a single factory intact. Devastation of industry was complete, and restoration has had to start from the ground up.

339 Starting from the ground up, however, is always difficult; and it is particularly difficult in the B.S.S.R., where there is a shortage
727 of everything required to do the job. Building materials, electric power, machinery, and transport are all critically scarce. The chief building material seems to be salvaged brick from the rubble of destroyed factory buildings; and most of the reconstruction work is being done by hand. Power equipment of the kind ordinarily seen on major construction jobs is almost completely lacking. UNRRA Mission members even as late as June 1946 had not seen a crane, powershovel, bulldozer, scraper, or tractor in use. Later in the year some of the UNRRA machinery began to arrive, but nowhere in quantities sufficient to make a real impact.

Lumber and bricks for reconstruction purposes are being manufactured at restored factories, but output is only a fraction of normal. Under the German occupation practically all sawmills in Byelorussia were looted of machinery and then demolished when the Germans were driven out. In Vitebsk oblast, all the large pre-war sawmills were destroyed. Up to June 1946 it had been possible to restore only a few. Polotsk oblast before the war had 12 large sawmills; in 1944 only about five to ten per cent. of the sawing frames remained. By mid-1946, although 17 sawmills were operating in this oblast, their work was proceeding on a very small scale, usually in the open air, and with limited equipment. Output of lumber was greater than before the war, but it consisted only of logs, beams, and rough-finished boards, since the equipment was inadequate for well finished work.

Brick plants were likewise destroyed by the Germans, and are in process of restoration. In Polotsk oblast, for example, there were before the war, 36 brick yards. In 1944 there was not one remaining in the entire oblast. In the summer of 1946 there were 17 back in partial operation; and 32 more were expected to be built in 1946-47.
339 The UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia supplied the following description of Polotsk brick factory No. 4, which had been partially restored by June 1946:

339 "Before the war this factory was fully mechanized, driven by electric power from an 85 kilowatt dynamo and producing ten million bricks a year. Today the only mechanized processes are the elevation of clay and the actual mixing and pressing of the brick. The clay is dug from the nearby river bank by hand. Water is pumped from the river by hand, six women operating a rocker hand-pump, three at each handle. The freshly processed bricks are lifted by hand from the machine into small cars, and the latter are then pushed by hand over a track to the drying sheds and furnace where again all operations are by hand. Power for the processing machine is supplied by one antiquated 60-horsepower stationary steam engine which broke down once during our short visit.

[433] "The production goal for 1946 at this Polotsk plant[1] is four million bricks, estimated by the Russian director as enough to build 40 apartment houses of ten four-room apartments each. Present output is limited to the capacity of one double-nozzle pressing machine, which we estimated could produce approximately 23,000 bricks per eight-hour day. This output may be contrasted with the brick plant in the UNRRA programme which is to have a specified capacity of 60,000 bricks per eight hours."

727 393 433 Probably typical of the general industrial situation in 1946 was a radio factory at Minsk, visited by UNRRA Mission observers in May. Before the war it was said to be the largest radio factory in the Soviet Union, with an output of 1,000 radios weekly. The Germans removed all the machine tools and other equipment and wrecked the interior of the building, leaving only the outer walls standing. Partial rebuilding of this factory required more than a year. Machine tools were brought from Germany, and the factory in May 1946 was estimated to be producing some what less than a third of its pre-war rate. Before the war the factory had a staff of 2,200 persons. The labour force at the time of these observations was 550, plus 60 to 70 German war prisoners. Of the workers employed, only 50 had worked in that particular factory before the war. Many of the present workers are very young, some just in their teens; and a large percentage is women. Since the factory itself had no training programme, its workers were trained in the Labour Reserve.

323 433 Where no machine tools are available, progress is even more limited, and the range of possible products is much reduced. For instance, the glass factory at Borisov is limited to hand-blown articles. No rolling equipment was available; hence no flat glass could be produced, although window glass was urgently needed for reconstruction of other industries and of housing. In the Vitebsk garment factory, the only sewing machines available are treadle-operated old fashioned models. In many instances, shoe production was largely confined to hand cobbling. Even where the factories have been restored and could produce more, the shortage of raw materials 433 depresses their output. The linen factory in Orsha was the largest in the Soviet Union before the war. In 1946 it was 70 per cent. restored, but flax production was so limited that the factory was

[1] [Brick factory No. 4--Analyst]

288 The output of cotton cloth in the B.S.S.R. will also come from
restored mills. The two million metre target is considerably below
433 the 1937 output of 9.3 million metres (0.27 per cent. of total Soviet
185 production), and even below the 1932 rate of 4 million metres, or 0.15
per cent. of the Soviet Union total.

295 Finished clothing, shoes, and hosiery in the B.S.S.R. are produced
under the Byelorussian Ministry of Light Industry; and the output in
433 1950 is expected to be as follows:

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Shoes	7 million pairs
Hosiery	13.5 " "
Knitted underwear	3,510,000 units
Knitted clothes	1,680,000 "

The shoe output will come mainly from large restored factories in Minsk, Vitebsk, Gomel, and other cities. The above figure does not include output under co-operative and local industry; the total shoe production in Byelorussia in 1950 being set at 9,430,000 pairs, as compared with 8,075,000 pairs in 1937, (4.41 per cent. of total Soviet production) and 3,462,000 pairs in 1932, (3.98 per cent. of the Soviet Union output).

The lower production targets for cotton cloth and hosiery may be associated with the fact that the U.S.S.R. now has available new sources of textiles and clothing, notably at Lvov, Klaipeda, Riga, Narva, Tallin, and other Baltic cities. Moreover, under the national Five Year Plan for the U.S.S.R., the cotton textile industry of Central Asia will be expanded near the sources of raw cotton, and proportionately less cotton will have to be shipped to processing mills in European areas of the Soviet Union.

Electric Power Stations

377 In 1937 the electric power stations of the B.S.S.R. had a capacity of 88,600 kilowatts and produced 430.4 million kilowatt hours of electric energy. Considerable progress had been made in electrification since 1932, when the B.S.S.R.'s stations had a total capacity of 60,000 kilowatts and produced 176.7 million kilowatt hours. For the entire Soviet Union, the output of electric energy in 1937 was 36,400 million kilowatt hours, as compared with only 13,540 million in 1932.

377 During the war the electric power stations of Byelorussia were
almost completely destroyed by the Germans. Since liberation they
727 have been restored to only a limited extent, despite assistance from
UNRRA, which, as part of the industrial rehabilitation programme,
has furnished a number of power stations complete. In June 1946, when
UNRRA Mission members visited Borisov, Orsha, Vitebsk, and Polotsk,
facilities were estimated to be as follows.

TABLE XI

377 Electric Power Facilities in Four Byelorussian Cities, Pre-War and June 1946

● 727

City	Population June 1946	Pre-war capacity of electric stations (kilowatts)	June 1946 as per-cent. of pre-war
Borisov	43,000	4,500	22
Orsha	34,000	30,000	10
Vitebsk	62,000[1]	12,000	6
Polotsk	24,000	2,500	2

[1] 1939 population: 167,424.

Source: UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, Minsk.

In these cities, all electricity available was being consumed by industry and public institutions, while dwellings were virtually without light. At Orsha, the restored facilities could have furnished light to dwellings as well, provided there had been wiring, switches, and bulbs.

The situation in rural areas is even worse. Before the war many collective farms had their own small electric power stations, all of which were plundered or destroyed by the Germans. The Surazh raion had six small farm stations with a total capacity of 800 kilowatts before the war; but even as late as June 1946 it had nothing, because although a new station was under construction at Surazh, there was no equipment for it.

The present shortage of electric power is a serious obstacle hampering industrial recovery. In this respect, UNRRA is making a considerable contribution. As at October 1, 1946, 30 power units with a total capacity of 8,400 kilowatts had been shipped to the B.S.S.R., and 35 additional units representing electric generating capacity of 10,400 kilowatts were still to be delivered.

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377 The Five Year Plan calls for the output of 650 million kilowatt hours of energy in 1950. To achieve this, electric power stations with a capacity of 243,000 kilowatts are to be rebuilt and put into operation. Small hydro-electric stations with a total capacity of 16,000 kilowatts are to be built, and the municipal power stations at Gomel, Mozyr, Grodno, and other towns restored.

For the development of the economy of the Republic, there are to be put into operation electric power stations under the Republic's jurisdiction with a total capacity of 47,000 kilowatts, including hydro-electric stations with 10,000 kilowatt capacity.

Transport

Railways

496 In 1928 the length of the railways in the B.S.S.R. was 2,500 kilometres; in 1932 - 3,000 kilometres; and in 1937 - 3,100 kilometres.[1] In 1937 the railways of Western Byelorussia had a length of 3,415 kilometres, according to the Concise Statistical Yearbook of Poland, published by the Polish Ministry of Information, London, 1941.

Roads

727 491 During the war, both railroads and motor roads suffered devastation and demolition at the hands of the Germans. The following extract from an UNRRA Mission report of June 1946 conveys the situation with respect to roads in the B.S.S.R.:

"In the cities visited and along the roads travelled by the Mission party during our 700-mile motor trip, all bridges and culverts had been destroyed. What had once been reinforced concrete and steel spans across the Berezina at Borisov, the Dnieper at Orsha, and the western Dvina at Vitebsk and Polotsk, are now reduced to rubble piers in the river beds and demolished approaches. Substantial wooden bridges, resting on log piers, have been erected at the main crossings, and remain today much as they were when first built in 1944 by the Red Army advancing westward. Some destroyed bridges have not been replaced at all, and river crossings are effected only by boat. Small bridges and culverts have been largely replaced by temporary plank crossings, and there are still numerous winding detours around culverts that remain unrepaired on less frequented roads.

"In our trip we travelled over three kinds of road surfacing: handpacked dirt, cobblestone, and asphalt. The Minsk-Moscow three-lane asphalt highway is in good repair over the stretch covered from Minsk to Orsha, and along the roadside we observed several road repair gangs with asphalt pots and two or three road rollers, of the trailer type. Elsewhere we travelled over cobblestone and dirt roads, all of which were in fairly good condition but are still pitted with remnant shell holes and numerous ruts, which in rainy weather are difficult to pass through. One trip which we planned to make, from Lepel to Bigomel, the partisan city which never surrendered to the Germans, had to be abandoned at the last minute because the bridge at the main river crossing en route had been blown up by the Germans and was not yet restored. Although road repair equipment could be used to good effect along the dirt and cobblestone roads, not more than half a dozen pieces of such equipment were observed during the entire trip, after leaving the Minsk-Moscow highway."

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[1] Socialist Construction, Moscow, 1939.

Housing Reconstruction

727 The cities of Byelorussia were universally laid waste by the Germans, and even today they are still in ruins with great empty spaces and blocks of gutted buildings. Rebuilding is proceeding slowly.

362 185 According to official estimates, 74 per cent. of the housing space in cities and raion centres of the B.S.S.R. was destroyed during the war. The Five Year Plan calls for the restoration of 4,200,000 square metres of urban housing during the next five years, of which 1.5 million square metres are to be constructed by individual home builders assisted by state loans. During the two years between liberation and September 1946, a total of 1.2 million square metres of housing had been restored in cities and raion centres; but this was the easiest part of the work, since it involved mostly the repair of those buildings which still had some walls standing. Housing restoration will have to move at a faster rate than 600,000 square metres a year to reach the 4.2 million square metres goal by 1950, when there is to be an estimated 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space in Byelorussia.

In the restoration plans, provision is made to erect three prefabricated house factories with a combined annual output capacity of 600,000 square metres of housing by 1950.

The long-term housing plan is to provide 9 square metres per person, according to the Mayor of Minsk. However, in October 1946 facilities were much below that standard, and it seemed doubtful to the UNRRA Mission whether the figure would be reached by 1950.

The present per capita housing space available is not known. But in cities like Gomel, UNRRA Mission observers have been given estimates that available houses are occupied at double to triple their pre-war capacity.

The only available figures on pre-war housing are those for the first Five Year Plan period. These apply to what were then classed as "okrug", or regional cities, of which there were in 1927, eleven with a combined population of approximately 540,000. In 1927-28 they had a total of 3,093,000 square metres of housing space, occupied at the rate of 5.5 square metres per person. The first Five Year Plan called for expanding the housing space in "okrug" cities to a total of 4,263,000 square metres, occupied at the rate of 6.69 square metres per person.

The target of 8.2 million square metres of urban housing space by 1950 is about double the 1932 figure. This amount, including housing in some 170 raion (district) centres, is distributed among what are classed as "oblast" cities (these governed directly by the oblast or regional soviet as well as by the local city soviet), which were 18 in number in 1945. Among this number are all those cities classed as "okrug" cities in 1926, plus seven cities in the western oblasts; Baranovichi, Brest, Vileika, Grodno, Lida, Molodechno, and Pinsk.

362 185 These seven cities were not included in the 1939 census, when the total urban population of Byelorussia was determined as nearly 1.4 million persons. Assuming that the urban centres of Byelorussia merely recover their pre-war population, and if the urban residents of western Byelorussia be included, the per capita urban housing space available in 1950 will certainly be much less than 9 square metres, since at that rate 8.2 million square metres could supply only about 900,000 occupants. The actual per person rate of urban housing space in 1950 is more likely to be near the 1932-33 rate if planned targets of reconstruction are achieved.

●727 In the rural areas of the B.S.S.R., shelter demolition amounted to 400,000 dwellings of collective farmers, and an indeterminate number of individual peasant homes. In the western oblasts, as has already been noted, the great majority of farmers are not yet in collectives. In a single oblast, Molodechno, 16,000 peasant farms were laid waste. In Grodno oblast, where 117,000 civilians were slain by the Germans, demolition of homes was on a equal, if not greater scale. Thousands of individual peasant homes were also destroyed in other oblasts. A reported total of 1.2 million buildings of all kinds, houses, barns, sheds, offices, were destroyed in the rural areas. As at October 1946, 235,000 dwellings had been restored in the villages, providing shelter for 1.5 million people who were then able to move out of temporary shelters, mostly dugouts and caves. On the whole, progress in the restoration of shelter seems to be more rapid in the villages than in the cities.

Supplementary Aid from the U.S.S.R.

727 362 On December 31, 1946, the Byelorussian Council of Ministers published in "Sovietskaya Byelorussia" a statement that at its request the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. had adopted a decree providing for assistance in the restoration of raions of the B.S.S.R. which had especially suffered from the occupation.

Under the terms of the decree, 27 million roubles have been granted by the U.S.S.R. for expenditure on 2,000 dwelling houses to be constructed in the areas of Byelorussia most devastated by the war. Built at state expense, these houses are to provide shelter for the most needy: families of war invalids, and of fighters (both army and partisan) killed in the war. The total fund is allocated for distribution among 38 districts or raions which are all situated in the eastern and central oblasts of the Republic. Vitebsk, Polotsk, Gomel, Mogilev, Minsk, Bobruisk, and Polessia oblasts are to benefit by the grant.

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population, as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 742 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped. The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

7: Krushinsky - 2 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

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928 The Bolshevik regime took away the independence of the 101 Belorussian nation by force. The region was first occupied by the Germans, and in 1919 and 1920 it became the arena of the savage and devastating Soviet-Polish War which came to an end only in November , 1920. The peace treaty which the Soviets and the Poles signed in Riga was tragic for Belorussia. In it a nation of eighteen million(1) was dismembered into three parts: about four million /2/ Belorussians were given by the Bolsheviks to Poland who, during her existence as a state tried, rashly but unsuccessfully, by every kind of intolerable method to turn Belorussians into Poles and Catholics. The Communist dictatorship was established over the remaining Belorussian territory. But even that remaining under the Communists was subdivided into two parts. Out of the six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya (1) the Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (B. S. S. R.) was organized. The Vitebskaya, Mogilevskaya, and newly organized Gomel'skaya Guberniya remained included in Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic 644 (R. S. F. S. R.). The six uyezds of the B. S. S. R. represented a very convenient base for the postwar struggle with Poland. Starting in the very first days after the conclusion of peace with Poland, the Soviets used every means to try and arouse discontent and alarm among the population, especially the Belorussians, who had been left in the power of Poland. The Soviets also attempted to undermine the Polish economy which was rather weak. To this end armed units of the G. P. U. were organized in the border regions of Belorussia and sent into Western Belorussia. These units plundered and burned estates, murdered and executed policemen and government officials. A certain Mukha, the leader of one of these units, was particularly renowned. These "insurgents" always had a place of

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1. According to other estimates the Belorussian nation at that time numbered not 18 but 20 and even 24 million persons.

1. The six uyezds of the former Minskaya Guberniya comprised the Minskoy, Borisovskiy, Igumenskiy, Bobrugskiy, Slutskiy, , and Mozyrskiy uyezd.

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Only toward the end of 1926, after the most persistent petitioning in the Kremlin, and at that time petitioning had not yet become perilous, the question of uniting the Gomel' Guberniya to the B. S. S. R. was raised. However M. Kalinin himself, the President of the Central Executive Committee of the R. S. F. S. R., came out sharply against unification. The Kremlin was forced to resort to a peculiar sort of plebiscite in order to refute the pretensions of the Belorussians. It organized a special commission with the Latvian, Peters, as president, which was to determine on the spot what language was spoken by the inhabitants of Gomel' Guberniya. It was decided that the population had forgotten its language and finally become Russified. No research was undertaken to determine where the population belonged ethnologically. The commission traveled around the sizable territory of the Gomel' Guberniya using the following method for its investigations: upon arriving in some inhabited place and meeting the peasantry, the members would enter upon some sort of unofficial conversation. This was taken down in shorthand, and an analysis of the notes refuted the calculations of those who had opposed the inclusion of Gomel' Guberniya in the B. S. S. R. The real reasons for the opposition to having the Guberniya transferred were of an economic nature. Gomel' Guberniya is very rich in various raw materials, especially high quality forests which are so situated that transportation of the wood is very convenient. It is criss-crossed in many directions by railroad lines and convenient water routes. A well equipped match industry is centered there, one which at that time was the most active in the U. S. S. R., and there is a paper industry in Dobrush. Obviously it was not intended that the economy of the B. S. S. R. be strengthened at the expense of that of the R. S. F. S. R. This is confirmed by the fact that such industrial centers as Zlynka, Novozybkov, Klintsy, and Starodub, all within twenty or thirty kilometers of Gomel', were not given to the B. S. S. R., simply because some match factories and other manufacturing are located there. The fact of the unification itself passed unnoticed by the masses. Gomel' Guberniya was included in the B. S. S. R. without the customary fanfare and pomp. /13/ The Belorussian nationalist circles were faced with new problems. It was indispensible to take all measures to include the new territory with its Belorussian population within the general scope of operations as quickly as possible, and, moreover, this transitional process had to be accomplished very carefully and painlessly. It all

668 depended on the capable efforts of the new Belorussian workers who
631 were sent into what had been Gomel' Guberniya. They were able to
728 cope with the task.

Minority Problems

563 191 The equality on the Belorussian territory of the four official languages, Belorussian, Russian, Polish, and Jewish, was recognized by a govermental decree. In practice only Belorussian was at all widely used, and Russian was employed in dealing with institutions of the U. S. S. R. Jewish and Polish were spoken in the national schools, kindergartens, theaters, libraries, and so on. The severity with which equality of the four languages was enforced sometimes became absurd. In the town of Rechitsa in 1928, at a municipal teachers conference, one participant who was the principal of a Jewish school made her observations in a speech in Jewish. Of course 661 an interpreter had to be used. A Belorussian schoolteacher, Mokhnach, who had been renowned in the past for his liberal convictions and activities, but who unfortunately was versed in the unexpected twists and turns of Soviet policy, proposed quite correctly that all speakers use "Russian, as it is the most widely understood." For this proposal, which would appear to have been quite innocent, Mokhnach was accused of Great Russian chauvinism, immediately fired from his job, excluded from the trade union, and also deprived of a pension after his forty-five years of service in the school system. This shows just how unsuccessfully the Soviets could choose a subject upon whom to demonstrate how severely and unrelentingly anyone would be punished who transgressed against the Stalinist policy towards the minorities.

563 [692] Special court chambers where litigation was conducted in Jewish were opened in the large cities to serve the Jewish population. In small towns and in some larger ones where Jews lived in compact groups, local and village soviets were formed -- providing service for the population in its native language. /14/

The national work concerning the so-called Polish population of Belorussia was a rather special case. In Minsk and in other cities there were several responsible workers /in the nationalist movement/ who were Poles by nationality. They were almost all Communists and native-born Poles, for the most part deriving from the Polish Socialist Party (P. P. S.). Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native

438 433 A large-scale industry had developed.[1] In place of the semi-handicraft workshops which predominated in the old days, large modern factories arose. The timber industry was modernised and developed for increased production of prefabricated dwellings, paper, cardboard, matches, chemical products, and artificial silk. Industries, such as meat-packing, starch and treacle, distilling, dairy produce, tanning, and flax, were highly developed. The mineral resources of the country served as a basis for the building up of the pottery, glass, cement, and similar industries. The engineering plants in Byelorussia turned out machine tools, agricultural machinery and peat-cutting machinery. The extraction of peat was conducted on an extensive scale.

483 241 474 After the Revolution, agriculture in Byelorussia also underwent a fundamental change. The individual peasants united in collective farms (kolkhozes) in which they jointly cultivated the soil and had their co-operative dairy farms, piggeries, poultry runs, and beehives. They received substantial assistance from the state in the form of financial credits, tractors, harvester combines, and other agricultural machinery, seeds, equipment for draining marsh-lands, and innumerable other kinds of assistance. Under the Soviet system the cultivated areas of Byelorussia increased considerably, and in 1937 exceeded that of 1913 by 35 per cent.

Area and Population

Area

131 The present area of the Byelorussian Republic is about 228,300 square kilometres. Nearly half of this territory was added in September 1939 when, after the collapse of the Polish State, Western Byelorussia, which had been seized by Poland in 1920, was rejoined to the B.S.S.R. as part of the Soviet Union. The area of this region was 108,000 square kilometres, and the population, 4.8 millions. Of this added territory, 35.5 per cent. was classified as arable, 23.5 per cent. as forests, 24 per cent. as pastures and meadows, and 1.3 per cent. as gardens and orchards.

[728] In August 1940 the area of Byelorussia decreased somewhat when parts of the Vileika and the Baranovichi provinces were transferred from the B.S.S.R. to the Lithuanian Soviet Republic. Another small decrease occurred after the war in Europe had ended; in August 1945 a treaty was signed between Poland and the U.S.S.R., adjusting the Soviet-Polish frontier roughly along the "Curzon Line", with some deviations in Poland's favour. In consequence of this, Poland received a small strip of the territory which had been previously incorporated in the B.S.S.R., including the largest town of Western Byelorussia, Bialystok.

Population

162 At the census of January 1939 the population of the B.S.S.R. was 5,567,976 (an increase of 11.7 per cent. over December 1926, when the

[1] [Between 1919 and 1941-- Analyst]

21: Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union R1
Belorussia RC1

III. *BYELORUSSIA*

The development of Soviet Byelorussia is essentially a copy of the history Be. of the Soviet Ukraine. In many respects it is a very poor copy. Byelo- 101 russia is considerably smaller than the Ukraine, it has no outstanding 186 economic wealth such as the Ukraine has and the national consciousness of the Byelorussian people has crystallized far less than that of the Ukrainians. The Byelorussians, it is true, can boast of an illustrious past and can claim for themselves the Lithuanian State of the Middle Ages, whose most important documents were couched in the Byelorussian language. However, the Byelorussians did not produce a Hetman Mazeppa, a vigorous rebel whose memory could inspire the present generation. The modesty of the Byelorussian national movement is almost touching. Nothing could characterize its spirit better than the title of the first Byelorussian publishing company founded in 1906 – 'In our windows also shall the sun shine'.

Be. Byelorussian nationalism in Czarist times was so weak that no Byelo- 186 russian succeeded in getting elected to the Duma. The landowners voted 642 for Polish candidates, and the peasants, in their ignorance, for extreme Be. Russian nationalists. The October Revolution found the Byelorussians [182] still too inarticulate as a nation to be able to cope with the great tests of the revolutionary years. Without much external pressure Byelorussia, or rather, what might have become Byelorussia, fell to pieces. The few Byelorussian intellectuals had no clearly defined political aim and turned from one extreme to another, wavering between a Polish, Lithuanian and Russian orientation and thus aggravating the chaos in which the Byelorussian people found themselves. By the end of 1920 the Byelorussians were under five different Byelorussian governments and National Committees, and in addition, had a Minister for Byelorussian Affairs in the Lithuanian Government.

Be At last the Peace of Riga concluded between Poland and Soviet Russia [728] in 1921 determined the division of Byelorussia: Western Byelorussia with about 2,000,000 Byelorussians went to Poland, while Central and Eastern Byelorussia became part of the Soviet Union.*

SOVIET POLICY IN EASTERN BYELORUSSIA

SU. At first the Soviet régime found it rather difficult to decide which terri- 635 tories to allocate to the Byelorussian S.S.R. When the B.S.S.R. was Be. formally constituted on January 16th, 1921, the Russian communists 642 131 161

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* The estimate of 2,000,000 is halfway between Polish and Russian statistics. According to the official Polish census there were but 1,123,000 Byelorussians in 'Western Byelorussia'. Molotov mentioned the figure of 3,000,000 when proclaiming the incorporation of Western Byelorussia into the U.S.S.R. on October 31st, 1939.

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538 Kupala avowed his incapacity to become a real Bolshevik poet, thinking in terms of the whole Soviet Union and of all mankind:

> 'My Fatherland – it is the whole world,
> I have torn myself away from my native soil!
> Yet still I am not free from it – in sleep
> I dream of Byelorussia!'

The role which Kolas and Kupala played in Soviet Byelorussia is unparalleled throughout the U.S.S.R. No Byelorussian Bolshevik ever assumed the role of a national leader of the Byelorussians – the leadership was in the hands of Kolas and Kupala. Instead of 'removing' the two poets, the Soviet régime tried to direct their poetic creation into the 'right channels' and to use them for communist propaganda. Kolas and Kupala were often criticized, at times they seem to have been in disgrace but they never disappeared, as did many excellent writers and poets of almost all the major peoples of the Soviet Union.

S.U.
[661] The purge of Kolas and Kupala[1] would have been tantamount to the bankruptcy of the Soviet cultural policy in the B.S.S.R., since the two were not only outstanding literary figures but actually cultural 'awakeners' of their people. Byelorussia could do without its 'national democrat' historians and folklorists, it could do without its leading communist politicians. Kolas and Kupala, however, were indispensable. Their case showed that there are limits even to purges in the Soviet Union. The purge in Byelorussia could not be carried so far as to endanger the cultural foundations of the third largest people of the Soviet Union. This is why Kolas and Kupala were spared despite all their 'sins' and 'deviations'.

The Soviet régime needed Kolas and Kupala not only as pillars of Byelorussian culture in the U.S.S.R. but also as the political heralds of Byelorussian irredentism which might evoke a response among the oppressed Byelorussian population of Poland. The two poets did indeed fulfil this task not as Bolsheviks but as nationalists and denounced most violently the partition of Byelorussia. Most typical in this respect was a poem by Kolas in which he cried out: 'Our homeland has been broken up by foreign robbers . . . Away with their frontiers! Down with their barriers! To us belong the fields and woods! Let us rise together with one mind and one will, happiness and freedom will not come to us of themselves! Long enough have we been hunted and driven from our homeland!'

'GREATER BYELORUSSIA'

Be.
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728 In September 1939 came the triumph for people like Kolas and Kupala,[2] who by the force of circumstances had abandoned national democracy and embraced some sort of Byelorussian national communism–Byelo-

[1] [Cf. cat. 116, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]
[2] [Cf. Category 538, pp. 157-158 -- Analyst]

21; Kolarz J-4 (no date) 1952 R1 Soviet Union BeloRussia RC1

russia became reunited at the price of Western Byelorussia accepting the 131
Soviet totalitarian régime. The B.S.S.R. increased its territory from 728
48,000 to 80,000 square miles and almost doubled the number of its
inhabitants. The merger of Western and Eastern Byelorussia created a
State of over 10,000,000 inhabitants uniting almost the entire Byelorussian people. The annexation of Western Byelorussia enabled the
Soviet Union to push nearer to Central Europe, but from a merely
economic point of view the territory was a liability. Western Byelorussia [132]
was easily the most backward part of the Polish State as it existed in the
inter-war period. The territory is devoid of any large industry, its agricultural soil is poor and there are but few rail and road communications.
Marshes cover a considerable part of Western Byelorussia. In the [133]
annexed former Polish province of Polesia which is 14,000 square miles
in area, the famous Marshes of Pinsk or Pripet Marshes form 56 per
cent of the total territory.[84]

There are but few small towns in Western Byelorussia; only two 361
localities have about 50,000 inhabitants each, Grodno and Brest Litovsk. Originally 'Western Byelorussia' as it had emerged from the Molotov-Ribbentrop deal for the partition of Poland, had one town of 100,000 inhabitants, Bialystok, a centre of the Polish textile industry and the only place in the whole of 'Western Byelorussia' possessing a fairly large industrial class. For this reason, Bialystok was chosen as a kind of emergency capital of Western Byelorussia during the weeks between its occupation by the Red Army and its full incorporation into the B.S.S.R. The 'Peoples Assembly' of Western Byelorussia which on October 28th, 1939, formulated its 'request for admission into the U.S.S.R.' also met in Bialystok.

The new 'centre of Western Byelorussia' had the drawback that it had 563
no Byelorussian population; it had only Polish and Jewish inhabitants
and the outskirts of the town were Polish. In view of the national composition of Bialystok and its surroundings the Soviet Government was [128]
unable to maintain its claim to the Bialystok area after the end of the war, particularly since it was located to the east of the Curzon line which Russia adopted in principle as the Polish-Russian frontier. The area of Bialystok covering roughly 5,800 square miles was thus re-allocated to Poland. This transfer was advantageous for the Soviet Union since the B.S.S.R. rid itself thereby of a Polish population of 1,000,000 and thus considerably reduced the seriousness of the minority problem within its boundaries.

After the annexation of Western Byelorussia the minority issue threatened to cause considerable worry to the Minsk Government, since half of the annexed population were either Poles or Jews. In the post-war B.S.S.R. this problem no longer arose not only because of the substantial frontier rectification in Poland's favour in the Bialystok area,

433 supply is greatly dependent upon recovery in grain production. So long as the grain supply barely meets the needs for bread, very little will be used for hogs and cattle. To regain the pre-war production level of fats will require at least three to five years.

185 The Five Year Plan, 1946-50, provides that 17 meat packing plants, 10 poultry farms, 11 urban milk-processing plants, two milk canneries,
231 and 150 dairies be restored or built in the B.S.S.R. As at December 1946 the Minister of Agriculture reported that 26,000 livestock farms were again functioning on collectives. These farms are looked to as the source of an estimated 35,000 tons of butter and cheese products in 1947.

Following is a table which shows the numbers of livestock in the B.S.S.R. in 1950, as fixed by the Five Year Plan.

TABLE VII

B.S.S.R.: Livestock Numbers in 1950 (Planned)

	Total	Including on collective farms
Horses	770,000	330,000
Cattle	2,860,000	852,000
Pigs	2,600,000	300,000
Sheep and goats	2,900,000	600,000

231 Source: The Five Year Plan, 1946-50.

It will be noted that the proportion of livestock held on the collectives is not great, except in the case of horses, which are regarded as means of production and are therefore not allowed in private ownership. A comparison of the preceding figures with those in Table VI shows how heavily the war has reduced the numbers. It is particularly important to note that the number of horses for 1950 is fixed far below the pre-war number existing in Byelorussia after the incorporation of the Western region. As has already been seen, the lack of these animals is the more seriously felt because of the limited number of tractors available.

Improvement of the Collective Farm Organization

731 Despite the major difficulties, Byelorussian farmers in 1946 made considerable progress toward regaining the ground lost during the war. In this respect, they were more fortunate than those in other areas of the Soviet Union, to whom 1946 brought disaster. From Moldavia to the Urals, south to the Kuban and north to Moscow, crops were ruined by the worst drought since 1891. Particularly stricken was the Ukraine, which before the war supplied one-fifth of the grain for the entire U.S.S.R.

731 This natural catastrophe, in addition to all the other burdens of post-war recovery, has necessitated even greater efforts by the farmers to overcome handicaps and to boost production as high as their hardest labours will allow.

474 The Soviet Government has, since the drought,[1] taken additional steps to eliminate difficulties and to strengthen the collective farm management. On September 19, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. issued a decree calling for the elimination of abuses of the collective farm charter. [647] A Collective Farm Council was created, the main tasks of which are to establish "strict control over the observation of collective farm statutes"; to guard the collective farm property against embezzlement or misuse; and to ensure greater participation in the farm management by the workers themselves.

Under the new regulations of September 1946, all lands illegally taken from the collectives are being restored. Sovietskaya Byelorussia reported: "More than 81,000 hectares of land... have been returned to the collective farms (in Byelorussia)." Unauthorized personnel are being taken off the payrolls; administrative staff is being reduced; and the collective farmers are taking greater part in the administration of the kolkhoz. General meetings are called regularly, and management and auditing committees elected by the membership are responsible for reporting back to the membership. "The democratic procedure of convening general meetings for discussion of and decision on vitally important questions... is now being returned."[1]

Planned Increases in Agricultural Production

185 433 According to the Five Year Plan, 1946-50, the crop area of the B.S.S.R. in 1950 is to reach 5.3 million hectares, including 3.2 million hectares under grain, 344,000 hectares under industrial crops, 1.06 million under potatoes, vegetables, and fruit, and 690,000 hectares under fodder crops.

Average yields of all crops are expected to be as follows: grain, 1.03 metric tons per hectare; potatoes, 14.5 tons per hectare; and flax, 0.3 tons per hectare. These are somewhat lower than the yields fixed for the Soviet Union as a whole because of the relatively poor quality of the soil in Byelorussia: for example, in the B.S.S.R. in 1950 the average yield of grain is to be 1.2 metric tons per hectare, while that of flax is put at 0.4 tons per hectare.

According to the Moscow periodical, Slavyane (1946, II-III, pp.32-35), the B.S.S.R.'s total production of grain in 1950 will represent an increase of 10 per cent. over 1940. On this basis, the 1940 grain harvest must have been between 2.7 and 3 million tons. In the U.S.S.R. the 1940

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[1] Sovietskaya Byelorussia, Minsk, December 20, 1946.

[1] [In 1946--Analyst]

295 is 70 workers, who are also share-holders, receiving 20 per cent. of the annual income in addition to regular wages for work performed.

474 Before the war the "Red Shoemaker" artel was situated in a different part of the city. The production process was then entirely mechanized, and the membership consisted of 300 workers. The plant was demolished by the Germans during the war; and the present artel was organized in 1945 when five pre-war members returned to Minsk, following the liberation. At present there is practically no machinery in the artel, and shoes are being turned out by hand.

Medical Supplies: General Health

727 In relation to the vast destruction of Byelorussian medical facilities during the war, the UNRRA medical programme of just over one million dollars is a drop in a bucket. According to official Soviet estimates, the Germans in Byelorussia "ruined and plundered 1,136 hospitals, clinics, and dispensaries," which represented 75 per cent. of all hospitals and almost 100 per cent. of the medical supplies and equipment of the Republic. The damage has been calculated at 600 million roubles (about 120 million dollars).

164 Byelorussian officials today say that the general health of the population is below pre-war standards; but there are no alarming epidemics. Infant mortality is higher than in 1940; and tuberculosis, which increased markedly during the war, is still a serious problem, especially among returned war prisoners, partisans, and former "slave labourers". Typhus, which flared up during the German occupation, still occurs sporadically; and malaria, which spread rapidly during the war when no treatment was available, is still widely prevalent, but is being gradually reduced by the restoration of swamp drainage and mosquito control projects.

146 The most general problem is perhaps malnutrition; and because of the food shortages, scurvy, rickets, and anaemia are prevalent. Children are small for their age; and the adult population, as might be expected in the absence of adequate food, clothing, and shelter, is not in optimum health.

UNRRA Shipments

648 Up to January 31, 1947, nearly 70 per cent. of the UNRRA medical programme for Byelorussia had been fulfilled; 163 gross long tons of drugs and equipment had been shipped. 742 The largest single item of the medical programme is a penicillin plant, parts of which began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in December 1946. In connection with the plant, the Byelorussian Government has designated a penicillin trainee to study penicillin production in Canada. A specialist hired by UNRRA is to aid in assembling the plant and in training other Byelorussian technicians in the production of the drug. The Byelorussian Government has expressed interest in using the same plant for the production of streptomycin.

648 742 Apart from the penicillin plant, other big items in the UNRRA medical programme include electrocardiographs, X-ray machines and film, and artificial limb manufacturing equipment. Drug requirements have involved the procurement of quinine and, as a substitute, atabrine. By the end of January 1947, slightly less than one metric ton of atabrine had been shipped.

743 648 Not the least of UNRRA's contribution to Byelorussian health has been the soap supplies furnished. In 1946 the only soap available in the hospitals and sanitoria (and this means generally the only soap available anywhere), came from UNRRA sources. This was also true of a large part of the diet of patients, which came from UNRRA food supplies; and of blankets and bedding, which were distributed to hospitals and children's homes.

Still among the urgent requirements in Byelorussian hospitals are beds and bedding, laboratory equipment - including more X-ray machines, microscopes, stains and medea, drugs, and lamps - furniture, kitchen equipment, food, and soap.

Agricultural Rehabilitation Supplies

648 241 UNRRA agricultural rehabilitation supplies began to arrive in the B.S.S.R. in February 1946 and consisted almost entirely of seeds. At the end of July the Byelorussian Government acknowledged receipt of 5,300 tons of vegetable and other seeds, which were estimated to be sufficient for planting from half a million to 600,000 hectares; and since favourable weather permitted late sowing, less than a thousand tons had to be held over for use in 1947. On all the farms visited by the UNRRA Mission to Byelorussia, the vegetable, clover, vetch, timothy and other grass crops had been started fron UNRRA seed.

Besides seeds - an important contribution toward increased food supplies - UNRRA has shipped fishing equipment, food processing equipment, and farm machinery - chiefly tractors. Deliveries of the latter, however, were heartbreakingly slow; and it was only in December 1946 that the first 221 UNRRA tractors arrived. The difficulty of procuring tractors has been one of the greatest obstacles to farm recovery in Byelorussia. The Mission estimated that had UNRRA tractors been available before August 1946, grain cultivation and production would have increased by 500 hectares and 500 tons for each tractor delivered.

Altogether, UNRRA plans to furnish over 800 tractors to the B.S.S.R.

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Industrial Rehabilitation Supplies

Shipments of industrial supplies up to January 31, 1947, amounted to 14,495 gross long tons valued at 10,081,000 dollars. Largest items were public utilities equipment (power generators, pipe for gas and water mains, etc.) and raw materials, chemicals and engineering stores. The following table shows the shipments by value as well as by tonnage.

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103 The origins of the term "White Russia" have also been sought in the religious background of the Slavic peoples. Supporters of this theory remind us that Constantine Porphyrogenitus used the term "white" in order to distinguish the baptized Croats and Serbs from those who remained pagan (Svencicki). But this distinction could not hold for the Belorussians, since all the Slavic tribes from Kiev to Novgorod were Christians in the fourteenth century when the name White Russia first appeared in documents.[7]

Discouraged by the historical evidence, one may seek refuge in the darkness of prehistoric times. According to certain writers, the Russian word for "white" (*belyj*) was derived from the name of an obscure Slavic deity *BELbog*, *BEL-gorjuč-kamen'* (otherwise: *alatyr'*,
[794] *aladyr'*, "magic stone").[8] Some traces of the ancient cult of Belbog are indeed found among the Western Slavs. Although little is known about the cult, one can deduce that Belbog was the opposite of Černobog, god of evil. Hence the association of the adjective *belyj* with anything good, pure, light and bright. The Slavic proper name Beloslav, though rare, supposedly expressed the same idea (Miklosich). Some writers have seen a relation between Belbog and Belun, a mythical character in Ukrainian and Belorussian folklore, personifying good fortune (Afanas'ev, Dahl).[9] It is only a step further to the proposition that the country was called "white" because its people worshipped a "white god."

The theory found no supporters at the time it was formulated (1826), but it was revived a century later by a group of Belorussian political exiles in Lithuania (1923). Impressed by the apparent

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teenth Century, XVII (1885), 321–30.) The name *červonaja* may thus have appeared as a Polish or Ukrainian translation from Latin. Indeed, the color symbolism may have nothing to do with it. In 1918–20, the peasant guerillas fighting both the Reds and the Whites and living in the woods, were often called *Zelënaja Rus'*. Cf. "*kondovaja, izbjanaja* Rus' " (A. Blok), "*sermjažnaja* Rus' " (N. Nekrasov), "*brodjačaja* Rus'," "*svjataja* Rus'," etc.

[7] At the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, "enigmatic northern Croatia . . . reappeared, after a long eclipse, as a young and vigorous pagan State." From the context of Chapter XXXI it appears that Constantine used the term "white" to stress the political independence of those Croats who "have remained without baptism to our day." Cf. Henri Grégoire, "L'origine et le nom des Croates et des Serbes," *Byzantion*, XVII (1944–45), p. 96.

[8] M. Makarov, "Neskol'ko slov osobennykh, upotrebljaemykh v raznykh oblastjakh Rossii," *Vestnik Evropy* XXI–XXII (1826), 143–48.

[9] Association of the color white with good fortune was also not unknown in the West. Among the different meanings of "white," Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary* lists: (now rare) "fortunate," "auspicious." Cf. F. Portal, *Des couleurs symboliques dans l'antiquité, le moyen-âge et les temps modernes* (Paris, 1837); K. E. Goetz, "Weiss und Schwarz bei den Römern," *Festschrift zum 25 jährigen Stiftungsfest des hist.-philol. Ver., Universität München* (Munich, 1905), pp. 63–73; more relevent though contradictory data in F. B. Gummere, "On the Symbolic Use of the Colors Black and White in Germanic Tradition," *Haverford College Studies*, I (1889), 112–62.

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563 but also, as in the case of the Ukraine, because of the transfer of Poles and Hitler's extermination of the Jews.

Another important task resulting from the annexation of Western Byelorussia still remains to be carried out by the Government of the B.S.S.R. A large proportion of the Western Byelorussians have little or no Byelorussian national consciousness, and they speak some sort of [197] local Slav dialect which they themselves do not identify as Byelorussian. This applies in particular to the population of Polesia where Polish statistics counted over 700,000 such 'local Slavs'. 'Greater Byelorussia' is now about to round off the formation of a Byelorussian nation by amalgamating the various brands of Byelorussians, not only formally in a purely administrative sense, but also politically and spiritually.

177.56 This process, intended to effect the transformation of the Western 563 Byelorussians into a full 'sovietized' people, has encountered consider- [795] able opposition, particularly among the Roman Catholics who had formed 20 per cent of the entire Byelorussian minority of the former North-Eastern Poland. The Roman Catholic Byelorussians had always most violently opposed the thesis of the 'brotherhood' between Byelorussians and Great Russians and their political organization under the Polish régime, the Christian Democratic Union, significantly called itself 'Byeloruthenian' instead of 'Byelorussian'.

186 Byelorussian opposition to the Soviet régime is dictated not only by economic and religious motives but also by national considerations. Although it has united Western and Eastern Byelorussia, the Soviet Government has offended Byelorussian nationalism by leaving the city of Vilna outside the Byelorussian 'State'. The Western Byelorussians looked upon Vilna as their national cultural centre and there may have been indeed a good case for including it in Byelorussia, but it was politically more expedient to make it the capital of Soviet Lithuania.

The difficulties which the Soviet régime had to face in post-war Byelorussia were not confined to the new western territories. The whole of Byelorussia had been occupied by the Germans for two to three years, and it was only natural that Soviet propaganda had to start in many respects right from the beginning when the Red Army re-entered Byelorussian territory. A statement by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party heralding the new propaganda campaign admitted indirectly that German Nazi propaganda had been successful among Byelorussians. The Communist Party organizations of Byelorussia were instructed in this statement to overcome 'the anti-collectivist and anti-state tendencies' with which the German occupants had indoctrinated the Byelorussian people.[35]

Many expressions of Byelorussian nationalism, however, existed quite independently of the moral consequences of German occupation. Judging by official Soviet admissions, Byelorussian nationalism, particularly

[762] Moreover, twenty-five percent of the native
563 Belorussian population professed Catholicism, while seventy-five
[778] percent was Orthodox. Even before the revolution the Catholic priests, and they were almost all Poles, made propaganda in the Catholic churches to the effect that all who professed Catholicism were Poles. As a matter of fact these "Poles" had not even mastered the Polish
563 language and were Belorussian by nationality. In the heyday of the
661 nationalities policy, the Polish Communists, perhaps only for reasons of propaganda and of course under the auspices and with the permission of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, renamed the whole Koydanovskiy Rayon, which is situated on the Polish-Belorussian boundary and has a Belorussian population of some thirty thousand, the Polish National Rayon. Kaydanov (sic), the rayon center, was renamed Dzerzhinsk and the whole rayon called Dzerzhinskiy. In the rayon center, on the square dedicated to the fierce, even though dead, chief of the rayon, a monument was erected to Dzerzhinskii which portrayed him standing straight up on a pedestal in a full-length soldier's overcoat and with a long face and a small beard. In the National Rayon compulsory promulgation of the Polish language was begun, a measure which the population had difficulty in comprehending. All institutions, schools, and village reading-rooms were changed over to Polish and the rayon newspaper came out in Polish. The population was mystified by these newly-created difficulties. After 1930, all the efforts to organize the Polish National Rayon in the name of Dzerzhinskii were pronounced a diversion of Polish spies. The higher leaders and organizers of the rayon were arrested and punished severely. Such a fate also overtook the Shestakovskiy Polish Soviet, named after the Polish communist Markhlevskii, in the Kopyl' Rayon, Minsk Oblast'. The Dzerzhinskiy Rayon retained the name of its chief and was once again called a Belorussian rayon. Both the village soviet and the local population of this ill-fated region were punished, almost one half of the population finding itself in Siberia eventually. Thus the completely innocent local populace paid dearly for the nationalities policy.

701 Belorussianization extended even into parts of the Red Army. The
563 Second Division in Minsk and the Thirty-third in Mogilev, for example, were renamed Belorussian territorial divisions in 1927. These two divisions were recruited exclusively in Belorussia -- it was intended to change the commands and the training into Belorussian in as short a period as possible. To prepare a staff of officers half the

204 consciousness as had Uzvysha upon the development of literature and art. Others were also published, and Molodniak was directed especially at youth. There were also departmental magazines, the organ of the Narkompros of the B. S. S. R., As'veta /Education/ was well known.

545 A special topic should be devoted to the development of the theatrical art.[1] In any mention of the successful development of the Belorussian national theatres, the very old First Belorussian Theater in Minsk deserves attention. Up until 1930, it was original in its creative work. With very infrequent exceptions it gave translated plays. It promoted a series of talented artists. /9/ The second Belorussian Theater was organized out of studios. A special role must be assigned to the Belorussian Traveling Theater which was organized and directed by the enthusiast Vladislav Golubok. Golubok was a man of many talents. He wrote several plays based on Belorussian national life which ran for long periods, and were removed from the repertoire of the Traveling Theater when the general destruction of everything national in Belorussia began. The services of V. Golubok and his theater to the Belorussian nation are exceptionally great. During its existence it made tours not only of the cities but even of the most inaccessible villages and hamlets under conditions which, materially and otherwise, were most difficult. The productions of the Traveling Theater were in accordance with the tastes of the national masses, always being accompanied by folksongs, music, and fold dancing. V. L. Golubok was deservedly the first person in Belorussia to acquire the title of national artist. In 1937 he was arrested by the N. K. V. D.

The Minsk Jewish Theater under the talented direction of Rafal'skii also enjoyed well-earned fame in Belorussia. It presented a series of plays on national themes. Among the Jews the play "Girsh Lekert" was particularly popular as it portrayed the hero, Girsh Lekert, of the revolutionary struggle in 1902 against the Tsarist government in Wilno.

814 The efforts of Belorussian and Jewish composers and collectors of folksongs, music, and folk dancing deserved particular attention. Their work at this time[1] was very opportune and is of colossal value. This aspect of the national folk culture had been neither investigated nor written down before the revolution . . . In ten or fifteen years, collectivization would have absorbed the beautiful national art of the Soviet, artifically created, 'chastushka,' composed by obliging

[1] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 11C—Analyst]

814 [661] literary and musical masters, in praise of the happy kolkhoz life and of the creator of all this happiness. The talented collector of folksongs, the composer Terravskii, worked indefatiguably after the revolution. His highly useful efforts were frequently interrupted by the N. K. V. D. and eventually (during the Ezhovsh china) he was banished and the collection of folksongs with his own musical arrangements confiscated and withdrawn from circulation. Soviet ethics do not permit the use of the work of a repressed person, no matter how brilliant. Similar also was the fate of the other collector of folk culture, a man who, already advanced in years, left western Belorussia for the Soviet territory in hopes of finding wide scope for his activity. Part of the work has survived along with its authors -- there is hope that somewhere the works of /10/ Terravskii, Grinevich, and [545] others have been preserved. Folksongs, music, and dances were remembered, written down, and arranged.[2] They were performed with great love by various choruses, musical societies in the countryside (later in kolkhozes) and in workers' clubs. Ensembles organized by the Narkompros[1] performed at concerts and on the radio, presenting their programs to the accompaniment of native instruments.

517 814 The study of local lore was very widespread. It was the best loved activity of the village intellegentsia, especially of the teachers. In those days there was neither bureaucratic banality nor any official plan in these regional studies. It was founded upon their own initiative and inclinations, and a free choice of subjects for investigation and study. Those who pursued it devoted their leisure to the study and description of the folk culture, the historical past and ancient monuments of their region. The local flora and fauna were studied and measures were taken to protect types which were becoming extinct (beaver colonies). In some places they published their own works (Gomel') and organized museums of the local displays. They worked voluntarily and were not paid for it. At first the study of local lore was under the tutelage of the Narkompros[1] of the B. S. S. R. and afterwards of the Academy of Sciences which published a special magazine devoted to the subject called, /Nash Krai /Our Country/.

The Land Problem, Boundaries

423 The land question was the most painful and unsettled one in Belorussia. Before the revolution arrangements for the use of the land by the peasantry were different from those in Russia . . . In Belorussia

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia -- Analyst]

[2] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

661 the desire to create its own Belorussian antonomous church. The national movement was also accused of wanting to preserve ancient church buildings, Catholic, Orthodox, and Jewish, at a time when their value as historical monuments was being denied. In this connection the remarks of the same investigating brigade of the Academy are characteristic: "One does not have to go far to discover the reasons for the attentive attitude toward the churches of the National-Democrat counter-revolutionaries, if the basic aims and intent of the latter are kept in mind. /36/ Belorussian National-Democrats -- the Nazalezhnik group -- who were dreaming of an independent national republic the whole time, never ceased in their efforts for an independent Belorussian autocephalous church. A bourgeois state cannot exist without a church. It is not accidental that the discussions about an autocephalous church which have been in vogue since the time of Nasha Niva /Our Cornfield/ have not stopped for a minute either among the Belorussian national-fascists on the other side of the border or among the counter-revolutionary National Democrats in the B. S. S. R. (page 226).

661 414 The well-organized movement for study of the region suffered particularly. Everything that had been accomplished through many long years was subjected to annihilating criticism, the movement now had to devote itself to promoting kolkhoz construction in the countryside; every effort at pure scholarship was declared counter-revolutionary and harmful to the country's socialist construction. R. Vydra in his exposure, Belorusskii natsdemokratizm v kraevodcheskom dvizhenii B. S. S. R. , /Belorussian National-Democracy in the Regional Study Movement of the U. S. S. R. / , writes this: "Belorussian Nats-Dems, who had almost completely taken over the regional studies movement in Soviet Belorussia, subordinated it to their own bourgeois-restorationist, counter-revolutionary, fascist aims, never hiding their historical connections with their own chauvinist-nationalists forebears of the Belorussian bourgeois camp. For this reason the historical essays on the study of Belorussia or the Belorussian countryside which appeared in Nash Krai /Our Country/ (1) are so very characteristic,

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1. Nash Krai /Our Country/ -- the organ of the Central Bureau of Regional Study. The principal articles of the National-Democrats appeared mainly in this magazine.

661 / 814 ● even though they conceal the roots of their so opportune study of Belorussia. The articles by Vasilevskii and Kasperovich in Nash Krai, /Our Country/ the historical essay in Kasperovich's book, Kraevedenie, vystupleniia na I i II Vsebelorusskikh s'ezdakh kraevedeniia, /Regional Studies: Speeches Made During the First and Second Congresses of Belorussian Regional Experts/ all this material unanimously and openly, without any sense of shame, established a connection between the ideas and organization of modern National-Democracy in the B. S. S. R. regional studies movement and the Belorussian bourgeois-democratic movement in pre-Revolutionary times" (pages 244 - 245). Kasperovich, Shliubskii, and others, the spiritual leaders of the regional studies movement, were dismissed from their posts and deported in 1931. Regional studies in the B. S. S. R. was headed by a small-minded careerist, Serafimov, and national-chauvinism was discovered not only in the magazine, Nash Krai /Our Country/, but even in its name. So it was renamed Sovetskii Krai /The Soviet Country/ a title which is loose enough to encompass the whole Soviet Union.

New Personalities /31/

661 Who replaced the arrested leaders of the Belorussian national movement? In place of the imprisoned People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R., Anton Balitskii, the former president of the Public Education Workers' Union, Anton Platun, was appointed. He had been director of the union for a very short period. Up until these new appointments he had been public prosecutor in Borisov for a while and then secretary of the Communist Party in the Slutsk district. In general he was considered only of average capacity. He had had neither training as a teacher nor even a secondary education, having progressed no further than one of the so-called higher grammar schools. In order to invest him with the authority befitting his appointment as People's Commissar of Public Education of the B. S. S. R. Platun was given the title of academician. He had no learned works to his credit, and the only lectures he had given were harangues at Party meetings. When the campaign for rooting out the "Natsdemovshchina" began, Platun took a rather active part in the unmasking of the nationalistic inclinations of the poets Ianka Kupala and Iakub Kolos. While in Narkompros he displayed no particular initiative and did not even

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GENERAL EDUCATION IN SOVIET BELORUSSIA

871 The development of Soviet schools in the Belorussian SSR during the first decade of Soviet rule took a somewhat different path from that in the other parts of the Soviet Union. Until 1921, Belorussia was an arena of wars and occupation, first German and then Polish. If the Council of Peoples Commissaries of the RSFSR decreed on August 21st, 1923, that the preparation of a project for general education should be undertaken, in the BSSR such a decree was issued only three years later, on April 7th, 1926. In the RSFSR lower and upper division schools were organized from the very beginning. In Belorussia the public schools adopted a seven year program which was separated into two divisions; the lower, comprising the first to fourth grades (the elementary school) and the upper, comprising the fifth to seventh grades. Technical schools of various specialties with four years of training included secondary education and paved the way to higher institutions of learning. The pernicious experiments of the State Learned Council of the People's Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR affected the schools of Belorussia to a lesser degree. The People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR was headed by the intelligent pedagogue V. Ignatovskii, professor at the Teachers' Institute. His pedagogical experience and knowledge of public schools did not allow Professor Ignatovskii to take the road of careless school reforms. In 1929 he was accused [661] of national democratism, and committed suicide. In 1930, widespread arrests of educators took place. Several experienced pedagogues in the People's Commissariat for Education of the BSSR were also arrested. After 1930, the original conservatism in matters concerning the schools of Belorussia was liquidated, and in the course of two to three years the schools assumed the monotonous Soviet form.

The Second World War quite definitely put an end to this chaotic educational regime in the Soviet schools and for many years [727] hampered the "completion" of general education. School affairs in Belorussia suffered particularly during the German occupation. Only through the great efforts and self-sacrificing work of Belorussian public workers and the local population, was it possible to arrange for work in schools and even to organize teachers' seminars during The war.

during the war.

Representatives of Soviet authority in their talks, the press, as well as in the propaganda which they disseminate, constantly claim that all the domains of industry, agriculture and culture in the USSR have not only been fully restored but have even surpassed the pre-war level.

"After the victorious end of the great patriotic war the school system was quickly restored. Universal general compulsory education lasting for seven years has been introduced since 1949 and is supposed to be carried out in the course of three years." (Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Èntsiklopediia / Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, vol. 9, p. 316).

But what in reality is the condition of the schools in Soviet Belorussia? One can judge the activity of the schools by the articles and notes, not particularly numerous, which usually appear in the Soviet papers toward the beginning and end of the school year. In these articles considerable space is devoted to /68/ dithyrambs addressed to the Communist Party and the Soviet government on their "constant care for national education". Very great successes and achievements in the work of the schools are also commented upon. But the real, far from comforting, situation in the restoration of schools is nevertheless to be detected in the newspaper notes. Here are some examples. The organ of the Communist Party of Belorussia, Zviazda, in its leading article of June 9th, comments: "The low level of success of students in Russian, Belorussian and mathematics is recorded every year in many rayons, oblast's, and even throughout the Republic. It is necessary to analyze the work of schools and teachers thoroughly, to reveal the real reasons for the low level of success in many schools. In a number of oblast's from year to year the law of general education is not being enforced".

The same paper, in its issue of August 8th, on the eve of the school year, demands insistently from all Party, soviet, trade union and other organizations that they "should see that the law of general education is fully enforced. Local soviets and school directors need to verify the lists of children subject to education once again." //

In the current year, the Ministry of National Education of the BSSR has already conducted an inspection of the enforcement of

871 the general education law in the Mogilevskaya and Baranovicheskaya oblast'. The inspection revealed the far from comforting state of general education in these oblast's. In the majority of the rayons of the oblast's which were inspected the registration of school age children is conducted very carelessly, and in some places registration is utterly absent (the Kamenskiy village soviet of the Kletskiy rayon). The population areas covered by some of the schools are not determined, and for that reason these schools have no responsibility for the registration of children. Also, there is no account of the reasons for long absences and general failure to attend school. It has been determined that merely in the Liakhovicheskiy rayon of the Baranovicheskaya oblast' for unexplained reasons no more than 90 children are being taught. As a result of the surveys, the lowest attendance of schools has been found in the Shklovskiy, Mstislavskiy, Khotimskiy, Novomyshskiy, Ivetskiy, Kletskiy, Bytenskiy, and other rayons. "In every one of these rayons some 100 and more children do not attend school", notes the Uchitel'skaia Gazeta on its pages of October 17th, 1953. More than 200 rayons can be counted in Soviet Belorussia, which means that more than 20,000 children are not attending school.

How can one explain the fact that children leave school for a time and often do not attend it at all? On the other hand, how explain the indulgence on the part of the Soviet authorities towards a population which is not abiding by the law of general education? The reasons are very simple. There are no special funds at the schools for offering help to children in obtaining clothes and footwear, no means are provided for the preparation of hot breakfasts. There are no living quarters for students at the schools, and transportation is not arranged for those living far from school. Soviet authority, with all its severity regarding the execution of its decrees, cannot "oblige" and force the barefooted, poorly dressed and hungry children of kolkhozniks to attend school in rain and in the severe winter weather. Soviet authority has declined to fulfill the obligation decreed in 1918 and confirmed by the Soviet government act of August 14th, 1930, "On general compulsory education". It refuses to offer state assistance to school children. This is why general education is not carried out in the schools.

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871 /70/ The success of school work depends on many things and to a considerable degree on conditions of training. For successful

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training, preservation of the health of students, and for their normal physical development, dry, warm, sunny, spacious classrooms with a sufficient amount of fresh air are necessary. During the war the school buildings in Belorussia were almost completely destroyed. Only ruins remained of large cities. But in smaller towns and villages the school buildings with rare exceptions were preserved at the beginning of the war. Later, however, with the development of partisan warfare in Belorussia, schools, hospitals, restored churches and other public buildings were, at the order of Moscow, completely burned by the partisans. This senseless barbarity caused great damage to the Belorussian people and its younger generation. Schools in villages were of no strategic importance and could not have been used by the Germans for military purposes. Part of the school buildings were destroyed together with the villages in various German maneuvers during the battles with partisans. We have already mentioned that Soviet propaganda claims that what was destroyed by the war has been restored, and that includes schools. Unfortunately, a wide discrepancy exists between Soviet propaganda and reality. The construction of schools in the BSSR is in an intolerable state, and the results of the "peaceful socialist construction" are far from comforting. This is proved by the scanty information which is appearing in the Soviet press. "The fact that the plan for the large-scale construction of school buildings and putting them to use has not been fulfilled year after year, can no longer be tolerated", writes Zviazda of May 31st, this year. One fact which attracts attention is the failure of school construction as a generally Belorussian phenomenon and furthermore an annual, therefore a constant one. It is reported in the paper that "the Polesskaya oblast' did not fulfill the plan for using the means assigned for the construction of schools: 18. 5 per cent in 1950, 23. 5 per cent in 1951, and 39, 3 per cent in 1952.The percentage of "exploitation" of the means for the construction of schools in the Polesskaya oblast' has been constantly decreasing for the last three years. In 1952, 40 per cent of the projected schools were not built. The Polesskaya oblast' is no exception: schools are not being built in the Molodechinskaya, Bobruiskaya, Vitebskaya or Polotskaya oblast's either. In the Polotskaya oblast' "of the two million rubles released by the government for the planned construction of schools, only 30 per cent has been used". The paper Zviazda of June 3rd of this

346 year notes that 466 thousand rubles were assigned for the construction
871 of the Vetrinskaya school in the Polotskaya oblast', but only 195,000 rubles have been used so far, and that not advantageously. Unsuitable brick was supplied, which was used in the building of walls. When the builders noticed it, 25,000 bricks had to be torn down and new bricks used for rebuilding the walls. In this way at least 35 to 40 per cent of the means annually assigned for building schools is not used. This means that it is not enough to have Soviet rubles in store: school buildings must be assured of labor power and building material. And the schools are the last of all to receive these advantages. Financial means, labor power and building material are first assigned to constructions of military significance, as the Soviet rulers know very well.

Apart from the state constructions, there exists in villages the [474] so-called "method of the people's construction". This method is very simple. Beside many other economic campaigns the kolkhozniks /71/ of a rayon are bound to build with their own efforts and means several schools, clubs, reading rooms, bridges, etc. The paper Zviazda quotes as an example the Sharkovskiy rayon in the Polotskaya oblast', which accepted the obligation to build at the beginning of the school year, by the "method of the people's construction", five seven-grade and one elementary School, to expand the school capacity to one thousand student seats, carry out thorough repairs in six schools and less general repairs in forty-two schools. We have no information as to the way the kolkhozniks of the Sharkovskiy rayon fulfilled this colossal program. If with a budget of hundreds of thousand of rubles and with building material and labor power at the disposal of the rayon executive committees the building of schools goes on for several years, one wonders whether kolkhozniks with the "method of the people's construction" will be able to enrich the rayon at their own cost with six new seven-grade schools, expand the school capacity to one thousand seats, and repair all the schools in the rayon. Judging by the pace of the work in constructing schools, Belorussian children will have to study reading and writing in inadequate, cold, restricted schoolrooms for many years to come.

The Soviet authority has assigned the fuel supply and maintenance of schools in country localities to the local population. In the usual confusion and without any organization or building material, schools are not being repaired and are deteriorating. In a number of rayons,

according to the reports of the newspapers, preparation and delivery [346]
of fuel for schools had not started even in August, shortly before the 871
beginning of the school year.

The success of training in schools is also conditioned by prompt and sufficient provision of students with textbooks, instruments, writing accessories, well equipped and completed physical, chemical and biological school laboratories and libraries. Several Soviet organizations, independent of each other, are engaged in providing students with textbooks in the BSSR. For this reason the textbooks, instruments and writing acessories have to travel a long way before they reach school shelves or bookstores.

"Books are left lying for a long time at the editor's and proof- [214] reader's in the publishing house, they are held up even at the typesetter's. Almost-finished products lie for two and more months at the sewing and binding establishments. All this means that the established norm for the work on textbooks is not fullfilled from one month to another... A considerable number of textbooks is held up because of the shortage of maps and the unsatisfactory organization of the productive process of publication and typography. Books concerned with methodology are being published particularly slowly: Out of 46 such titles which were planned, only 5 have been printed." (Zviazda of May 21st, current year).

Colossal sums are being expended for the printing of various propaganda material, as well as publications designed for foreign countries. This material is made up with special care and luxury. The appearance of the textbooks designed for Soviet schoolchildren is quite different.

"Textbooks are printed on poor paper, covers are smeared with printer's ink. The work of the sewing and binding divisions of the printing press is of a particularly low quality. Many books, even if they are most carefully treated, soon break and fall apart." (Zviazda, April 25th of this year). /72/

The most indispensable tools and products are absent from the school laboratories. The laboratories of provincial and country schools are especially poor. The teaching of physics, chemistry and natural sciences is reduced to a study without experiments and examples. The situation of the school libraries is no better: they are mostly oversupplied with Soviet political literature, while the classics are unavailable. School furniture consists of an assortment of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

number of "elevated" teachers. If under Soviet conditions, institutions are managed by non-specialists, then why could not elementary school teachers without an adequate knowledge be "elevated" into the post of lecturer at secondary schools? It has been proved that such "elevation" is practiced in Soviet schools. Therefore, it is not an accident that the knowledge of secondary school students is far from corresponding with the program of instruction and that there also are many who have to repeat a year. In the Klichev secondary school, for example, every fourth student "fails". (Zviazda May 23rd, this year). From these examples it is obvious that the majority of Soviet school teachers lack extensive, systematic study in the acquisition of pedagogical and, to a considerable degree, general knowledge. 875

The Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ministry of Education of the BSSR is called upon to study progressive methods of instructive and educative work, to give directives to the oblast' institutes in the task of improving the teachers. [647]

"Those few works which deal with the teaching experience which have been prepared and published by the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy, are of an informative character they are not profound in their content, and they lack scientific basis." (Zviazda August 4th, this year).

The oblast' institutes of improvement do not enjoy authority among the teachers. The function of these institutes is to analyze and generalize the best examples of the pedagogical work of teachers and then to introduce them in the schools.

"The people working at the Polotskiy Institute generally do not have a serious attitude towards their obligations. Teachers from the town and the oblast' do not feel that the Institute is improving teachers to the point of active leadership, or that it is actually helping them in their work", - this is how Ozernikov, a teacher from the town of Polotsk, characterizes the work of the Institute. (Zviazda, July 1st, 1953).

The immediate direction of school affairs is carried out by the rayon sections of national education through the appropriate inspectorship. The school inspector is the official state controller of the methods of school instruction, but he is also expected to help teachers with questions of instruction and education. But "in the apparatus of particular rayon sections of national education, and 871 875

871 even in those of the oblast', there are often people who have no
875 adequate pedagogical experience or even any education. Moreover, people who have nothing to do with pedagogy, who turned up by chance, people who are not conscientious, often hold leading teaching positions." This is how Zviazda of July 9th, this year, characterizes the administrative workers who are directing the schools in the Belorussian Soviet Republic.

875 The legal position of the Soviet teacher is unbearably difficult,
554 particularly in villages. He is presented with many demands of all kinds, and at the same time no one accepts him. A great deal of additional social work is laid upon him, and at the same time he has no rights. The teacher must necessarily be an "active citizen, a public worker". The activity and public spirit of the teacher is determined by the local Party and soviet authority, which is in most cases uncultured, limited, and often stubborn. The teacher, according to established procedure, is obliged as an active citizen to participate in all of the numerous gatherings which bear absolutely no relation to school matters; he is expected to express himself in a spirit favorable to the local authority at these gatherings. Arranging the program of all gatherings is also his responsibility. The active teacher has to be a regular visitor of the reading rooms, the club, the red corner, the office of the village soviet, the office of the kolkhoz direction, etc; the visits to these village institutions are usually not connected with necessity or real interest. The teacher must /74/ be a member of all soviet organizations and societies; he abolishes illiteracy, must help in the preschool education, collect signatures for loans. Without his participation the bulletin-board newspaper does not appear. Teachers are being induced to participate not only in political but also in economic campaigns, such as the collection of taxes in kind--of grain, potatoes, milk, salvage, and scrap metal--often at the expense of their regular work at the school. The teacher is expected to be a "militant atheist", to read lectures on anti-religious themes and at the time of great holidays to organize anti-religious demonstrations, games and parades with the students. During election campaigns the teacher is the duty-bound propagandist and agitator for the candidates sponsored by the Communist Party. The president of the village soviet, the kolkhoz and especially the secretary of the local Party cell may call on the teacher at any time to fulfill

various obligations nowhere defined, order that the work at school 875
be discontinued for the purpose of organizing some gathering, etc. 554
Every disobedience, protest and especially withdrawal from this so-called social work is fraught with unpleasant consequences for the village teacher who has no rights. He will be labelled anti-social, a saboteur; he will be "dealt with" at public gatherings, in newspapers which are posted and even in the rayon paper, all this without any regard for the safeguarding of the teacher's authority among the students at the school in which he works. Under such conditions can the teacher find time to prepare for his duties at school, carefully draw up his plan of work, accurately correct written assignments of the students, have time for self-instruction and outside training? It is not an accident, then, that in the Bobruiskaya oblast', out of 429 teachers who had registered for outside training in the Pedagogical Institute only 284 completed the plan of study. In fact, the teacher is placed in a position, deprived of rights, in which he "did not, does not, and could not be" in any state regime except the Soviet.

With such a deplorable composition of the teaching cadres, 871
with their superficial professional and general educational level, one should not expect a correct and successful organization of the pedagogical process in the Soviet school. If, furthermore, one considers the abnormal and often unbearable conditions under which students have to study and teachers have to perform their pedagogical duties, it becomes clear why the law concerning general education is not observed. The frequent cases of students who leave school before their time, failures en masse, a shocking decline of grades, with a low level of the knowledge of subjects studied in school, are not surprising.

Last year the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party 873
issued the following resolution: 871

"The transition from seven-year education to general secondary education (a ten year program) should be completed at the end of the five-year plan in the capitals of the republics, in the subordinate cities of the republics, in the oblast', krai and large industrial centers. Conditions for the full realization of general secondary education (the ten year program) during the next five-year plan should be prepared in other towns and villages."

The Congress also considered it necessary to introduce

873 871 polytechnical instruction in the secondary schools and to initiate measures essential for the transition to general polytechnical education. For to bring about general secondary education in the entire Soviet /75/ Union, will require many years of intelligent, serious planning, to ensure the possibility of realizing this very important measure, and large material expenditures beside the Soviet paper rubles. The "completion" of the process of realizing a general seven-year education throughout the country has been going on since 1939, that is, for more than fourteen years. Innumerable facts prove that even the seven-year education is in many cases fictitious, and even the Soviet press does not conceal it. On September 1st of this year, on the day of the beginning of school, the newspaper Izvestiia, after a considerable doese of enthusiasm over the successes of the Soviet school, could not help admitting the following:

"The realization of the transition to secondary education presupposes a universal and strict carrying out of the general seven-year education. But, is the latter organized everywhere? No, unfortunately not everywhere. In the last year in a number of oblast's and rayons not all of the children and adolescents were taught; part of the students left school before the end of the seven-year course. Schools, divisions of national education and executive committees reconciled themselves to this. The preliminary results of the last school year prove that in many schools the level of success of the students is still low, while in a number of rayons there is even some increase in the number of repeaters."

871 There is no need to repeat the reasons for the unfavorable state of instruction in Soviet schools. Schools, like the other domains under Soviet management, suffer from an incurable disease, the source of which is the depraved Soviet system. Such high cultural aims as the transition to a ten-year general education of the children of school age cannot be achieved within one five-year plan. The decision of the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party served a propaganda purpose and will have no practical significance over the course of many years.

The transition of schools to polytechnical instruction has better chances of being realized even in a comparatively short time. Polytechnical reform is not a new thing in Soviet schools. Experiments with polytechnical reforms have taken place before, but the

work did not go beyond the students' cutting sticks for colors, etc. From all indications, the present polytechnical reform was conceived somewhat differently. It will be conducted from above, from the senior classes of the ten-year and even seven-year schools. Soviet authority is interested in preparing qualified cadres of workers. Workers are needed in factories and mills, in kolkhozes, and sovkhozes and at machine and tractor stations. Technical cadres are also very much needed in the Soviet army. And it is to train qualified cadres that the polytechnical reform will be adopted in senior classes of secondary and seven-year schools so as to organize practical work for students in factories and mills for those in cities, and in the workshops of machine and tractor stations and in Kolkhozes and sovkhozes for those in villages. Two aims will be achieved: qualified workers will come out of schools, and during the period of training, millions of adolescents will be used on the works of projects and on the farms. Preparation for the polytechnical reform is already being carried out. The Minister of Education of the RSFSR, Kairov, in his speech of August 10th of this year, spoke of the necessity of reviewing textbooks and programs, "as they are overabundant in second-rate material on geography, history and literature." More than 70 school textbooks are subject to review. The newspaper Pravda of August 18th of this year, in the article "On the Eve of a New School Year" also notes that one of the/76/ worst defects in the work of schools is the overburdening of students, which negatively affects the course of instruction and the education of the children". The Soviet press points also to the illiteracy of students and their poor mastery of the native tongue and of mathematics. The reduction of the programs will, of course, not affect the political curriculum, and the programs of mathematics, physics and chemistry will not be reduced either. The programs of literature, history, geography and other disciplines of the humanities will be reduced to the minimum. Secondary school will approach trade school with the compulsory practical work on projects and farms; the study of exact sciences will be enforced. It is in this light that the new tendency of instruction in Soviet secondary schools is foreseen.

S. Krushinskii

7: Krushinsky - 5 - G-4, 5 (no date) 1953 RC1 Belorussia RC1

668 The People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belo-
214 russia /Narkompros/ became the headquarters of activity. Here follows a short schematic description of the most important measures taken up until 1930. The Narkompros took measures to have the instruction in all schools translated into the native language. This was difficult work since the schools did not have textbooks in the native language, the lack of elementary readers in the primary schools being a particularly difficult obstacle to overcome. However in a comparatively short period old and experienced teachers compiled some elementary readers modeled upon the literary styles of Belorussian writers, and a famous Belorussian linguist compiled a school grammar of the native language (1).

> 1. Ia. Lesik compiled a school textbook of the Belorussian language; the first normative grammar of Belorussian on a scientific basis, adapted simultaneously for use in schools had been issued in 1918 by the Belorussian philologist, V. Tarashkevich, long before Lesik.

The majority of the presses in Belorussia had been destroyed during the war and in any case, they were not suitable for mass publication of textbooks. During the course of a year some textbooks were printed in Germany and a few in Wilno under the direction of the well known writer D. Zhilunovich who was a member of the collegium of Narkampros. He subsequently reorganized the publishing business and the presses in Minsk. With contemporary techniques, the work which he accomplished would not seem to be very great, but in those times, against a background of general devastation, it was quite an accomplishment.

● 871 Normal schools were opened in Minsk and a number of
666 other cities. The one in Minsk played a particularly positive role. It was staffed with the best teachers, and during the twenties was named after Professor Ignatovskii. The education in these normal schools was directed toward the preparation of teachers who were also politically active nationalists. Their graduates subsequently devoted themselves, with great success, to the cultural rebirth of their nation. /5/ Many of them finished universities, and out of the former pupils of the Minsk normal school there developed a number of talented poets and writers. To fill the great lack of teachers of

668 the Belorussian language one-year courses were made available in
871 the secondary schools. These courses remained available, as a provisional measure, for all, up to regular graduates of the pedagogical department of the Belorussian University. Taken all together these measures made it possible as early as the beginning of the academic year of 1924, to change the curriculum to the native language in schools, kindergartens, adult evening schools, and stations for the liquidation of illiteracy.

563 Parallel with the Belorussianization of the schools Narkompros[1]
871 took practical steps to guarantee their own languages to the schools of the national minorities. The work among the Jewish population was particularly successful. The special Jewish inspectors of Narkompros, and in the neighboring towns as well, worked intensively to open schools, kindergartens, orphan homes and libraries for the Jewish population. This great task was not always accomplished smoothly, and thus aroused some dissatisfaction against the zealous promulgators of the national policy. Under the new system parents did not have a free choice of schools for their children; besides, in the cities and especially among the Jewish intelligentsia, only Russian was spoken in the family, and the children experienced great difficulty in learning Hebrew when they got to the Jewish national schools. Then, in addition, after completing a Jewish secondary school they had a very limited choice of higher schools for further education. A thorough knowledge of Russian was necessary to pass the entrance examinations into an institution of higher learning outside Belorussia, and in the Belorussian university itself there was only one Jewish subdivision (section) in the educational department where the lectures were given in Hebrew. Therefore some parents went to work in the R.S.F.S.R. or sent their children to school there, and thus the Jewish secondary schools, especially the upper classes, were not full, having three to five pupils in a class. Nevertheless the work accomplished was great and fully responded to the national feelings of the masses among whom Zionistic tendencies still existed. Among the special normal schools in Belorussia were the pedagogical academy in Gomel' which had instruction in Hebrew, and the agricultural technical school in Kurasovshchina, not far from Minsk. Jewish children were fully assured of having seven-year schooling and even secondary schooling in some cities. Homeless orphans were collected in Jewish orphan asylums, and there were a sufficient number of kindergartens. /6/

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

563 Less significant was the network of educational institutions where
871 the teaching was done in Polish, although in Narkompros there were special inspectors for Polish schools. The reasons for this situation will be told below.

873 Narkompros[1] directed particular attention to the organization and development of the Belorussian State University. Through a common effort this young cultural center established a serious course of study and acquired a well-deserved prestige. In a comparatively short time a solid group of well-known professors had been chosen, among them the following Belorussian scholars: the popular and generally respected philologist Ia. Lesik, the mathematician Krutalevich, Piotukhovich, who was a literary specialist, Shchekotikhin, who was a professor of art, as well as others. It should be noted that the first graduates of the University, in 1931 and 1932, were better than the later ones. The reason is that despite the rather difficult conditions of student life they were not distracted into other pursuits. They were required to learn, not to participate in various bombastic political campaigns and social undertakings, which were the affair of the Communist Party. Afterwards, unfortunately, the examinations of student activists were judged according to their participation in
661 political campaigns. A prominent role in the administrative organization of the University was played by the rector, Professor Picheta, a man who had been very successfully selected for this high post. Although not a Belorussian himself, he worked actively and conscientiously to promulgate all measures necessary for strengthening the University. He was arrested in 1930 and, like many others who were arrested that same year, subjected to "investigation" because of a "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" (the S. V. B. - in Belorussian "Sayuz Vyzvalen'nya Belorusi"), which was created at the time by the G. P. U. of the B. S. S. R. More will be said about this below. In the activity of the S. B. V. according to the "plan" (or as popularly put the "tale") of the G. P. U., Professor Picheta was to play the part of a "connecting link" between the S. B. V. and the "Union for the Liberation of Russia", also created for the occasion by the G. P. U. in Russia, which was to be headed by the well-known academician Platonov, a historian like Picheta. After the failure of the "activities" of the S. B. V., Professor Picheta, like the others, was sent into exile and served it in the city of Vyatka where he distributed tickets in the city dining rooms. Due to the stubborn petitions

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

661 of his wife who had stayed in Moscow, he was liberated in 1934 by the personal intercession of Stalin in the Central Executive Committee of the U. S. S. R. and went back to Moscow. He became a corresponding member of the All-Union Academy of Sciences, and when the political situation demanded that the Kremlin organize a Slavonic Committee, Professor Picheta was used to work on it. He died about three years ago, and in the Soviet press his death was noted as that of an outstanding scholar and, of course, a patriot. /7/

873 To further scientific work and unite the efforts of scientific and cultural workers, the Institute of Belorussian Culture (Inbelkul't) was set up in Minsk with Professor Ignatovskii as its head.1 Relatively quickly, this Institute laid the foundations for the organization of a Belorussian Academy of Sciences. Then it was filled with graduate students from the first graduating classes of the University. Professor Ignatovskii left Narkompros and became the president of the Academy of Sciences.

874 In addition to the University of Belorussia the former Agricultural Institute was still functioning. At first it was located in Minsk but then changed its name to the Agricultural Academy and moved to the city of Gori-Gorkiy in the Orshanskiy Okrug. There it had plots of land for practical work and the appropriate laboratories. The agricultural high school had been there before the revolution, and the Higher Agricultural Institute before the Polish uprising of 1863. In addition there was a Veterinary Institute in Vitebsk. The Agricultural Academy and the Veterinary Institute were under the control and direction of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R.

871 The Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. developed and put into effect a national educational system which was adapted to Belorussian conditions and differed somewhat from that of the R. S. F. S. R.1 In the latter, the training comprised essentially a ten-year course of general education, while according to the system of the Narkompros of Belorussia the basis was a seven-year course of general education divided into two parts, comprising four and three years respectively. The academic year of 1925-1926 was the first year when the plan of general compulsory education on the basis of the first part of the seven-year course went into effect. (1) In the towns education was

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1. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskai Entsiklopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1927 edition, Vol. V, p. 409.

1[Organizing about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 116 - Analyst]

871 on the basis of a full seven-year school. The system also planned to have technical schools opened with three-or four-year courses of study for the preparation of semi-qualified specialists. Professional and technical schools were based upon this seven-year system of general education and were the final link in the system of secondary education. The next level comprised institutions of higher education -- the universities and higher technical institutes. /8/ The night schools for adults were also adapted to the system of national education.

Periodicals and Cultural Activities

517 The many-sided cultural activity was a powerful stimulus for attracting the masses, particularly the youth. Youth was fired with the idea of a rebirth of the national culture.[a] The number of poets, writers, critics, scientific workers in history and geography, in the search for natural resources and in the studying of various kinds of problems grew tremendously in Belorussia. The Belorussian Academy of Sciences, the University, and the Agricultural Academy followed watchfully, occasionally challenging but always supporting the bold initiative of young innovators in literature, art, and research. The Belorussian State Publishing House did not refuse to publish the work of young poets and scholars, counting on their further development. The attentive attitude of national figures toward the young cadres inspired their efforts and distracted them from the often rather difficult living conditions.

204 The newspapers Zvezda /The Star/ and Sovetskaia Belorussia /Soviet Belorussia/ were printed in Minsk,[a] the first was considered a Party organ and the second an organ of the Soviet power. Local papers were also printed in the surrounding towns, and eventually each rayon had its own newspaper. Zvezda /The Star/ was considered the most influential although in reality its influence was determined largely by a certain fear of becoming an object of treatment on its pages. As it was a Party organ, Zvezda /The Star/ made pretensions to the infallibility and unimpeachibility of everything printed in it. It copied the general line of the Moscow Pravda and made every effort to imitate it. Newspapers were also printed in the Hebrew and in Polish. The popular literary-social magazine Polymia /The Flame/ Molodniak, /Youth/ Uzvysha /Upwards/. Polymia had an influence upon the formulation of a national

[a] [Beginning about 1920, cf. pp. 3-4, category 11c - Analyst]

8: Redmer G-4 (no date) 1947 RCl Belorussia RCl

I INTRODUCTION

131 The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic is situated on the western border of the U.S.S.R. between the upper and middle reaches of the Rivers Dnieper, Bug, and Western Dvina. The area of the Republic is about 89,000 square miles; and in October 1939 its population was estimated at 10,386,000 inhabitants; the capital city is Minsk. Approximately a quarter of the territory consists of valuable coniferous (pine and fir) and deciduous (oak and aspen) forests. The climate is mild and humid; and beneath the soil lie large deposits of peat, phosphorites, fire-proof, acid-proof and porcelain clay, marl, sand for glass making, and bituminous shale.

642 The B.S.S.R. was proclaimed on January 1, 1919. In 1922, together with the other Soviet Republics, it formed one of the constituent Republics of the U.S.S.R.

At the Republican level, its government consists of a Council of Ministers and the Byelorussian Supreme Soviet (the legislative assembly of the Republic). At the Federal level, it has representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., which is divided into two chambers having equal legislative power: the Soviet of Union elected on the basis of one member for every 300,000 of population; and the Soviet of Nationalities, elected on the basis of 25 deputies from each Union Republic, 11 from each Autonomous Republic, five from each Autonomous Region, and one deputy from each national area. Also at the Federal level are the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. - the highest organ of executive and administrative power - and the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

648 Each Republic has the right to enter into relations with foreign states and to conclude treaties with them; but foreign affairs concerning the interests of the Union as a whole are dealt with by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R. Certain of the ministries - for example, the Ministry of Foreign Trade - are the exclusive prerogative of the Union Government. Others exist both at the Union level and in the individual republics; and a number exist only in the republics.

631 For administrative purposes the Byelorussian Republic is divided into thirteen "oblasts", or provinces, which in turn are subdivided into "raions", or counties. Oblasts and raions are not necessarily uniform in size and population, but vary according to the concentration of industry, or for administrative convenience.

871 Between its inception in 1919 and the outbreak of war in 1941, the B.S.S.R. had made substantial progress in all directions. Universal education had been introduced, and over a million children attended school. Before the war the Republic had 23 higher educational institutions, a large number of technical schools, and 30 scientific research institutes headed by the Academy of Science.

9: Amer. Russ. Inst. (no date) 1950 RCl Belorussia RCl

[Constitution as of July, 1947]

641 Art. 95. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to maintenance in old age and also in case of sickness and disability.

[657] This right is ensured by the extensive development of social insurance of factory and office workers at state expense, free medical service for the working people and the provision of a wide network of health resorts for the use of the working people.

[871] Art. 96. Citizens of the Belorussian SSR have the right to education. This right is ensured by universal, compulsory elementary education; by free education up to and including the seventh grade; by a system of state stipends for outstanding students in higher educational institutions; by instruction in schools being conducted in the native language and by the organization in the factories, state farms, machine and tractor stations and collective farms of free vocational, technical and agronomic training for the working people.

[562] Art. 97. Women in the Belorussian SSR are accorded equal rights with men in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life.

The possibility of exercising these rights is ensured to women by granting them an equal right with men to work, payment for work, rest and leisure, social insurance and education, and by state protection of the interests of mother and child, state aid to mothers of large families and to unmarried mothers, maternity leave with full pay, and the provision of a wide network of maternity homes, nurseries and kindergartens.

[563] Art. 98. Equality of rights of citizens of the Belorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an indefeasible law.

Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely, any establishment of direct or indirect privileges for, citizens on account of their race or nationality, as well as any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law.

[659] Art. 99. In order to ensure to citizens freedom of conscience, the church in the Belorussian SSR is separated from the state, and the school from the church. Freedom of religious worship and freedom of anti-religious propaganda is recognised for all citizens.

Art. 100. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to strengthen the socialist system, the citizens of the Belorussian SSR are guaranteed by law:

(a) Freedom of speech;
(b) Freedom of the press;
(c) Freedom of assembly, including the holding of mass meetings;
(d) Freedom of street processions and demonstrations.

These civil rights are ensured by placing at the disposal of the working people and their organizations printing presses, stocks of paper, public buildings, the streets, communications facilities and other material requisites for the exercise of these rights.

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641 Art. 101. In conformity with the interests of the working people, and in order to develop the organisational initiative and political activity of the masses of the people, citizens of the Belorussian SSR are ensured the right to unite in public organizations -- trade unions, co-operative associations, youth organisations,

661 published by the Leningrad Publishing House in 1948. On the orders of Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party Gei, "brigades" were formed in the Academy of Sciences, and they meticulously searched through publications, mimeographed speeches, and addresses for elements of National-Democracy. The prose and poetry, as well as newspaper articles, of writers and poets suspected of "Natsdemovshchina" were subjected to careful scrutiny and inspection. Besides those who were arrested, other, so-called "unexposed" National-Democrats, were smoked out. The attacks were transformed into persecution, and as a result of this badgering the famous Belorussian poet, Ianka Kupala, became desperate and attempted to kill himself after the manner of the Japanese samurais. School texts were leafed through carefully, and most of them withdrawn from circulation -- especially reading chrestomathies, grammars, and collections of dictations. Some were withdrawn automatically upon the arrest of the author and independent of their content, while others were banned as being considered inappropriate to the era of collectivization in agriculture and the Five-Year Plans. In the reading 626 chrestomathies examples of private farmers either in small villages or isolated homesteads were not permitted. /31/ Nor were the arith- 872 metical problems ever taken from the life of an independent farmer. The teachers themselves had to make up problems using the kolkhoz life or cooperative trade as a base. Moreover, only high quality produce or well-fattened stock could appear in the problems. Similarly, with regard to cooperative trade, only examples which affirmed its superiority over private trade could be employed. Some teachers, especially in the provinces, who were not sufficiently experienced in the subtleties of this Soviet policy were not only fired from their jobs but even arrested for using the following sort of example in a dictation. "Three lean kolkhoz cows were grazing in a meadow." All these switches and changes unquestionably had their impact upon the quality of work done in the schools, but educational leaders were held less responsible for the absence of textbooks than for using ones which were "ideologically inconsistent."

Theater repertoires were also subjected to severe inspection.* 661 Everything even remotely reminiscent of Belorussian nationalism 536 disappeared from the stage, the artistic value of the play notwith- 626 standing. The First Belorussian Theater was forbidden to give Na Kupale, /On St. John's Eve/, a marvellous fairy-tale based on the national folk legend of the search for the "flower of luck" on the

*[After 1930, cf. pp. 32-33, category IIc - Analyst]

various obligations nowhere defined, order that the work at school 875
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with their superficial professional and general educational level, one should not expect a correct and successful organization of the pedagogical process in the Soviet school. If, furthermore, one considers the abnormal and often unbearable conditions under which students have to study and teachers have to perform their pedagogical duties, it becomes clear why the law concerning general education is not observed. The frequent cases of students who leave school before their time, failures en masse, a shocking decline of grades, with a low level of the knowledge of subjects studied in school, are not surprising.

Last year the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party 873
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"The transition from seven-year education to general secondary education (a ten year program) should be completed at the end of the five-year plan in the capitals of the republics, in the subordinate cities of the republics, in the oblast', krai and large industrial centers. Conditions for the full realization of general secondary education (the ten year program) during the next five-year plan should be prepared in other towns and villages."

The Congress also considered it necessary to introduce

873 871 polytechnical instruction in the secondary schools and to initiate measures essential for the transition to general polytechnical education. For to bring about general secondary education in the entire Soviet /75/ Union, will require many years of intelligent, serious planning, to ensure the possibility of realizing this very important measure, and large material expenditures beside the Soviet paper rubles. The "completion" of the process of realizing a general seven-year education throughout the country has been going on since 1939, that is, for more than fourteen years. Innumerable facts prove that even the seven-year education is in many cases fictitious, and even the Soviet press does not conceal it. On September 1st of this year, on the day of the beginning of school, the newspaper Izvestiia, after a considerable doese of enthusiasm over the successes of the Soviet school, could not help admitting the following:

"The realization of the transition to secondary education presupposes a universal and strict carrying out of the general seven-year education. But, is the latter organized everywhere? No, unfortunately not everywhere. In the last year in a number of oblast's and rayons not all of the children and adolescents were taught; part of the students left school before the end of the seven-year course. Schools, divisions of national education and executive committees reconciled themselves to this. The preliminary results of the last school year prove that in many schools the level of success of the students is still low, while in a number of rayons there is even some increase in the number of repeaters."

871 There is no need to repeat the reasons for the unfavorable state of instruction in Soviet schools. Schools, like the other domains under Soviet management, suffer from an incurable disease, the source of which is the depraved Soviet system. Such high cultural aims as the transition to a ten-year general education of the children of school age cannot be achieved within one five-year plan. The decision of the Nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party served a propaganda purpose and will have no practical significance over the course of many years.

The transition of schools to polytechnical instruction has better chances of being realized even in a comparatively short time. Polytechnical reform is not a new thing in Soviet schools. Experiments with polytechnical reforms have taken place before, but the

563 Less significant was the network of educational institutions where
87/ the teaching was done in Polish, although in Narkompros there were special inspectors for Polish schools. The reasons for this situation will be told below.

● 873 Narkompros[1] directed particular attention to the organization and development of the Belorussian State University. Through a common effort this young cultural center established a serious course of study and acquired a well-deserved prestige. In a comparatively short time a solid group of well-known professors had been chosen, among them the following Belorussian scholars: the popular and generally respected philologist Ia. Lesik, the mathematician Krutalevich, Piotukhovich, who was a literary specialist, Shchekotikhin, who was a professor of art, as well as others. It should be noted that the first graduates of the University, in 1931 and 1932, were better than the later ones. The reason is that despite the rather difficult conditions of student life they were not distracted into other pursuits. They were required to learn, not to participate in various bombastic political campaigns and social undertakings, which were the affair of the Communist Party. Afterwards, unfortunately, the examinations of student activists were judged according to their participation in
66/ political campaigns. A prominent role in the administrative organization of the University was played by the rector, Professor Picheta, a man who had been very successfully selected for this high post. Although not a Belorussian himself, he worked actively and conscientiously to promulgate all measures necessary for strengthening the University. He was arrested in 1930 and, like many others who were arrested that same year, subjected to "investigation" because of a "Union for the Liberation of Belorussia" (the S. V. B. - in Belorussian "Sayuz Vyzvalen'nya Belorusi"), which was created at the time by the G. P. U. of the B. S. S. R. More will be said about this below. In the activity of the S. B. V. according to the "plan" (or as popularly put the "tale") of the G. P. U., Professor Picheta was to play the part of a "connecting link" between the S. B. V. and the "Union for the Liberation of Russia", also created for the occasion by the G. P. U. in Russia, which was to be headed by the well-known academician Platonov, a historian like Picheta. After the failure of the "activities" of the S. B. V., Professor Picheta, like the others, was sent into exile and served it in the city of Vyatka where he distributed tickets in the city dining rooms. Due to the stubborn petitions

[1] [the People's Commissariat of Public Education of Belorussia--Analyst]

661 of his wife who had stayed in Moscow, he was liberated in 1934 by the personal intercession of Stalin in the Central Executive Committee of the U. S. S. R. and went back to Moscow. He became a corresponding member of the All-Union Academy of Sciences, and when the political situation demanded that the Kremlin organize a Slavonic Committee, Professor Picheta was used to work on it. He died about three years ago, and in the Soviet press his death was noted as that of an outstanding scholar and, of course, a patriot. /7/

873 To further scientific work and unite the efforts of scientific and cultural workers, the Institute of Belorussian Culture (Inbelkul't) was set up in Minsk with Professor Ignatovskii as its head.[1] Relatively quickly, this Institute laid the foundations for the organization of a Belorussian Academy of Sciences. Then it was filled with graduate students from the first graduating classes of the University. Professor Ignatovskii left Narkompros and became the president of the Academy of Sciences.

874 In addition to the University of Belorussia the former Agricultural Institute was still functioning. At first it was located in Minsk but then changed its name to the Agricultural Academy and moved to the city of Gori-Gorkiy in the Orshanskiy Okrug. There it had plots of land for practical work and the appropriate laboratories. The agricultural high school had been there before the revolution, and the Higher Agricultural Institute before the Polish uprising of 1863. In addition there was a Veterinary Institute in Vitebsk. The Agricultural Academy and the Veterinary Institute were under the control and direction of the Commissariat of Agriculture of the B. S. S. R.

871 The Narkompros of the B. S. S. R. developed and put into effect a national educational system which was adapted to Belorussian conditions and differed somewhat from that of the R. S. F. S. R.[1] In the latter, the training comprised essentially a ten-year course of general education, while according to the system of the Narkompros of Belorussia the basis was a seven-year course of general education divided into two parts, comprising four and three years respectively. The academic year of 1925-1926 was the first year when the plan of general compulsory education on the basis of the first part of the seven-year course went into effect. (1) In the towns education was

1. Cf. Bol'shaia Sovetskai Entsiklopedia /Large Soviet Encyclopedia/, 1927 edition, Vol. V, p. 409.

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000 of local handicraft production, it is not standardized and not hygienic.

875 Soviet propaganda falsely claims that the Soviet teacher has been raised to a level upon which the teacher in the capitalist society did not, does not and could not be, that the teacher is the central figure in the school. In fact, however, the Soviet teacher is the teacher with the fewest rights and least security in the world. The teaching ranks in Belorussia have several times been subjected to investigations and purges, thousand of teachers were arrested and depŏrted to concentration camps. The older generation of teachers who survived the First World War and came back to their schools were immediately placed under suspicion by the Soviet authority. They were not trusted , they were considered enemies of Soviet projects. Teachers in cities and villages were subjected to mass arrests during the nineteen-thirties at the time of the suppression of the national democratic movement in Belorussia. Not only the old teachers, but also the young ones, those who had completed the Belorussian university, the pedagogical institutes, were sent to concentration camps in far-away Siberia upon the slightest suspicion of national tendencies. Teacher-experts in regional studies, collectors of folk songs, fables, proverbs, etc., were the ones who suffered particularly. They were all put together with the national democrats, the "enemies of the people". The persecution of the years [661] 1936-1938 definitively liquidated all those who were valuable and intellectual in the teaching profession. Thousands of teachers, male and female, were killed during the war. Those who survived and remained on the territory occupied by the Germans were, once the Soviet authority returned, subjected to cruel punishment and mass deportation from the regions of Belorussia. There are at the present time many vacant teaching positions in the schools. Thus, in the Bobruiskaya oblast'" ... it has become a commonplace fact that schools, children's homes, and rayon sections of national education remain without directors for several months. In the Klichevskiy rayon, for example, one can count eleven people temporarily performing the duties of directors and in charge of teaching in the schools. (Zviazda of May 23rd of this year).

A considerable number of teachers is inexperienced, without special pedagogical preparation, with a feeble general background and cultural development. The inspectors of the schools explain the failure of seven-grade school students by the existence of a large

875 number of "elevated" teachers. If under Soviet conditions, institutions are managed by non-specialists, then why could not elementary school teachers without an adequate knowledge be "elevated" into the post of lecturer at secondary schools? It has been proved that such "elevation" is practiced in Soviet schools. Therefore, it is not an accident that the knowledge of secondary school students is far from corresponding with the program of instruction and that there also are many who have to repeat a year. In the Klichev secondary school, for example, every fourth student "fails". (Zviazda May 23rd, this year). From these examples it is obvious that the majority of Soviet school teachers lack extensive, systematic study in the acquisition of pedagogical and, to a considerable degree, general knowledge.

[647] The Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy of the Ministry of Education of the BSSR is called upon to study progressive methods of instructive and educative work, to give directives to the oblast' institutes in the task of improving the teachers.

"Those few works which deal with the teaching experience which have been prepared and published by the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogy, are of an informative character they are not profound in their content, and they lack scientific basis. " (Zviazda, August 4th, this year).

The oblast' institutes of improvement do not enjoy authority among the teachers. The function of these institutes is to analyze and generalize the best examples of the pedagogical work of teachers and then to introduce them in the schools.

"The people working at the Polotskiy Institute generally do not have a serious attitude towards their obligations. Teachers from the town and the oblast' do not feel that the Institute is improving teachers to the point of active leadership, or that it is actually helping them in their work", - this is how Ozernikov, a teacher from the town of Polotsk, characterizes the work of the Institute. (Zviazda, July 1st, 1953).

871 875 The immediate direction of school affairs is carried out by the rayon sections of national education through the appropriate inspectorship. The school inspector is the official state controller of the methods of school instruction, but he is also expected to help teachers with questions of instruction and education. But "in the apparatus of particular rayon sections of national education, and

871 even in those of the oblast', there are often people who have no
875 adequate pedagogical experience or even any education. Moreover, people who have nothing to do with pedagogy, who turned up by chance, people who are not conscientious, often hold leading teaching positions." This is how Zviazda of July 9th, this year, characterizes the administrative workers who are directing the schools in the Belorussian Soviet Republic.

875 The legal position of the Soviet teacher is unbearably difficult,
554 particularly in villages. He is presented with many demands of all kinds, and at the same time no one accepts him. A great deal of additional social work is laid upon him, and at the same time he has no rights. The teacher must necessarily be an "active citizen, a public worker". The activity and public spirit of the teacher is determined by the local Party and soviet authority, which is in most cases uncultured, limited, and often stubborn. The teacher, according to established procedure, is obliged as an active citizen to participate in all of the numerous gatherings which bear absolutely no relation to school matters; he is expected to express himself in a spirit favorable to the local authority at these gatherings. Arranging the program of all gatherings is also his responsibility. The active teacher has to be a regular visitor ~~of~~ the reading rooms, the club, the red corner, the office of the village soviet, the office of the kolkhoz direction, etc; the visits to these village institutions are usually not connected with necessity or real interest. The teacher must /74/ be a member of all soviet organizations and societies; he abolishes illiteracy, must help in the preschool education, collect signatures for loans. Without his participation the bulletin-board newspaper does not appear. Teachers are being induced to participate not only in political but also in economic campaigns, such as the collection of taxes in kind--of grain, potatoes, milk, salvage, and scrap metal--often at the expense of their regular work at the school. The teacher is expected to be a "militant atheist", to read lectures on anti-religious themes and at the time of great holidays to organize anti-religious demonstrations, games and parades with the students. During election campaigns the teacher is the duty-bound propagandist and agitator for the candidates sponsored by the Communist Party. The president of the village soviet, the kolkhoz and especially the secretary of the local Party cell may call on the teacher at any time to fulfill

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